# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 147 002 PS 009 363

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Miller, Forbes, Ed. |
| TITLE | The Young Child in Focus. Proceedings of the National Conference of the Australian Pre-School Association (14th, University of Melbourne, May 15-21, 1976. |
| INSTITUTION | Australian Pre-School Association, Canberra. |
| PUB DATE | May 76 |
| NOTE | 179p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.83 HC-$10.03 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Child Abuse; Community Services; Day Care Services; *Early Childhood Education; *Foreign Countries; Government Role; Handicapped Children; Home Programs; Minority Group Children; Parent Participation; Physical Environment; *Preschool Children; *Preschool Education; *Preschool Programs; Preschool Teachers; Program Evaluation; Special Libraries; Toys |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Australia |

ABSTRACT

This book contains papers and speeches presented at the 14th National Conference of the Australian Preschool Association held in Melbourne in May 1976. Topics discussed include early childhood education, handicapped children, parental involvement in education, evaluating preschool programs, day care, teaching young children, interdisciplinary team-work, family and community, television, child abuse and other subjects related to preschool children's development and education. (SB)

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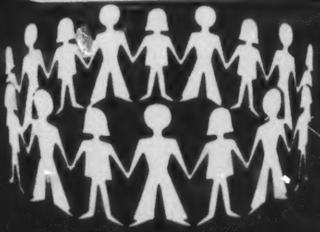

# THE YOUNG CHILD IN FOCUS

**Proceedings of the
14th National Conference of
The Australian
Pre-School Association**

PS 009363

# THE YOUNG CHILD IN FOCUS

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FOURTEENTH
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
THE AUSTRALIAN PRE-SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION
HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF MELBOURNE
15th-21st MAY 1976

EDITED BY FORBES MILLER

THE AUSTRALIAN PRE-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION INC.

*Published in 1976 by*
*The Australian Pre-School Association Inc.,*
*Education Centre, University Avenue, Canberra*

*Printed by McKellar Press Malvern Pty. Ltd.,*
*33 Glenferrie Road, Malvern, Victoria*

*© The Australian Pre-School Association Inc. 1976*

*National Library of Australia*
*Cataloguing-in-Publication data:*

*Australian Pre-School Association. National*
*Conference, 14th, University of Melbourne, 1976*
*The young child in focus*

*ISBN 0 909860 09 2*

*1. Education, Preschool — Australia — Congresses*
*I. Title*

*372.210994*

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# Acknowledgements

THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE of the Fourteenth National Conference of the Australian Pre-School Association wishes to thank the Interim Committee of the Australian Government's Children's Commission, the Victorian State Government and the Creswick Foundation for grants towards the cost of conducting the conference.

It acknowledges with gratitude the help given by the University of Melbourne and Trinity College.

It is also grateful to the following organisations and individuals. For assistance with displays: Design Course, School of Art, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (Ray Clinch, Ian Dickinson and Geoff Bullock, under the guidance of Gerard Herbst); Chris Charge and Hamilton Aikin, for photographs; Cassidy and Baker, for photographs (through the Victorian Society for Crippled Children and Adults); Oldmeadows Publications Pty. Ltd.; the Ecumenical Migration Centre; the lecturers and students of the School of Architecture, University of Melbourne. For having made the videotape *Just Like Me* (about children with handicaps) for showing at the conference: Mrs Margaret Walpole.

The Conference Committee expresses its warm appreciation of the efforts of all who helped to make the conference a success, including particularly the keynote speakers from abroad (Dr Lilian Katz, Dr Tessa Blackstone and Dr Patricia Minuchin), other overseas visitors and Australians eminent in the fields of child care and early childhood education who contributed through addresses, discussion, workshops, chairmanship and other leadership activities

# The Australian Pre-School Association Inc.

A.P.A. was formed in 1939 as a focus for State organisations concerned with the vitally important first years of a child's life and development.

In the first instance, these organisations were the Kindergarten Unions and the Teachers' Colleges they had established. Later they became the State Branches of A.P.A.

Membership was then opened to other voluntary organisations with similar objectives of providing services of health, education and welfare of children, their families and the community.

When the World Council for Early Childhood Education (O.M.E.P.) was founded in 1948, the A.P.A., being the only national body representing the education of early childhood, was deemed to be the Australian member. Represented at the inaugural meeting, Australia has continued to take an active part in O.M.E.P.'s programmes.

# Executive of the A.P.A., 1976

*Hon. Life Vice-Presidents:* Lady Bailey, O.B.E.; Lady Bonython, O.B.E.; Miss Christine M. Heinig; Mrs. K. P. M. Jones.

*President:* Lady (Vincent) Fairfax

*Deputy President:* Mrs Evan Thomson, O.B.E.

*Vice-Presidents:* Miss Florence Kendall; Mrs Whitney King, C.B.E.; Mrs Joyce McConnell, M.B.E.

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*General Secretary:* Mrs Lorna Bailey.

*Executive Director:* Mr Alan Holmes.

*Education Director:* Mrs Rosemary Brown.

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Miss Florence Kendall, Chairman Australian Pre-School Association, Victorian Branch
Miss Heather Lyon, Principal, Institute of Early Childhood Development
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## Programme Committee

Miss Beth Stubbs, Convener
Miss Jean Adamson
Miss Nancy Bastow
Mrs Carl Bolden
Miss Rosamonde Combes
Miss Heather Lyon
Miss Mary Swift

The Programme Committee was assisted by Sub-Committees which planned and hosted concurrent sessions.

# Opening of the Conference

ON SATURDAY, 15th May, 1976, the Fourteenth National Conference of the Australian Pre-School Association was opened by the Governor of Victoria, His Excellency the Honourable Sir Henry Winneke, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., Q.C., K.St.J.

On Sunday, 16th May, a Conference Church Service was conducted at Trinity College Chapel, University of Melbourne, by the Primate of Australia, the Most Reverend Frank Woods, D.D., K.B.E., Archbishop of Melbourne.

# The Young Child in Focus

By Dr. LILIAN G. KATZ*

I WANT to take the opportunity of this opening session to address the conference theme in a general way and to speak to those concerns we all share as parents, teachers, government officials, agency directors, public servants, tertiary educators and political leaders.

I hope you will keep it in mind that I speak to you from the perspective of experience in another country. The extent to which my remarks are appropriate to the Australian scene will have to be evaluated by each of you. My remarks here represent no official position; rather they are based on my own thinking and interpretation of the state-of-the-art of early childhood education and development.

I note that in the Australian Pre-School Association's booklet, *Policy Statement on Children's Services,* eleven Association aims are listed (pp. 4-5), the first of which is "To promote the optimum development of the pre-school child." I want to address this aim by recounting a recent experience with a group of young and zealous students who were discussing the reactions and impressions they had from working in day-care centres. One young woman spoke of her experience in deeply disappointed tones. Among the complaints against the programme she listed was that the director refused to let the children have small animals in the centre environment. I listened appreciatively for a while to the righteous indignation only the young and inexperienced can enjoy. I then asked her as gently as I could: "Let's speculate! What do you think are the chances that a child can develop into optimum adulthood without having had animals to play with in the day-care centre?" After a few moments' thought, she indicated that the chances were fairly good. "What about finger paint? Block play? Can a child grow into normal adulthood without them in the day-care centre?" I asked. A lively discussion followed these questions, leading all of us to search for answers to the question, What does each child have to have for optimum development? I want here to share with you my own answers to this question by offering seven interrelated propositions. I hope these propositions will be helpful to you as you inspect your own answers to the question, What does each child have to have for optimum development?

The seven propositions below are built upon an assumed first principle which I have discussed on earlier visits (Katz, 1976), namely, that whatever is good for children is only good for them in the "right" or optimum proportions. Another way of saying it is that, just because something is good for children, more of it is not necessarily better for them. This "principle of optimum effects" applies to so many influences on children's environments that I have often referred to it as the "Law of Optimum Effects." Among the many examples are: attention, affection, stimulation, independence, novelty, choices of activities, etc. All of the latter can be thought to be "good" for children. But only in optimum amounts, frequencies or intensities.

Taking the first principle of optimum effects as fundamental, we can return to the question of what children have to have for optimum development.

*Proposition One: The young child has to have a deep sense of safety.* I am referring here to psychological safety, which we usually speak of as a sense of "security". But over the last twenty years or so the term "security" has come to be used as a cliché. By psychological safety I refer to the subjective feeling of being connected and attached to one or more others. Experiencing oneself as attached, connected —or safe—comes not just from being loved, but from *feeling* loved, *feeling* wanted, *feeling* significant, etc., to an optimum (not maximum) degree. Note that the emphasis here is more on *feeling* loved and wanted than on being loved and wanted.

As I understand early development, feeling strongly bonded or attached comes not from the warmth and kindness of caretakers alone. The feelings are a consequence of the child perceiving that what he (or she) does, or does not do, *really matters* to others—matters so much that they will pick him up, comfort him, get angry and even scold him. Safety, then, grows out of being able to trust people to respond not just warmly but *really.*

I suggest that this proposition applies to all children, whether they are wealthy or poor, at home or at school; whether they are handicapped or normal, at whatever their ages until perhaps young adulthood.

---

* Dr Katz is Professor of Early Childhood Education and Director of the Educational Resources Information Centre (E.R.I.C.) Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, U.S.A. She was one of the keynote speakers at the conference and gave this address on 15 May 1976 after the conference had been opened by the Governor of Victoria, His Excellency the Honourable Sir Henry Winneke, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., Q.C., K.St.J.

## 2 *The Young Child in Focus*

*Proposition Two: Every child has to have adequate —not excessive—self-esteem.* At first glance this seems to be such a simple proposition. But a few comments are in order here.

It is useful to keep it in mind that one does not acquire self-esteem at a certain moment in childhood and then have it forever. Self-esteem is nurtured by and responsive to the significant others—adults, siblings and other children, throughout the growing years.

Even more important to remember here is that one cannot have self-esteem in a vacuum. Our self-esteem results from evaluations of ourselves against criteria. We evaluate ourselves as estimable against criteria which we acquire very early in life. We acquire them in our families, neighbourhoods, ethnic groups and later on from peer groups and the larger community. Early in life these criteria against which we come to evaluate ourselves as acceptable, worth while—against which we judge or experience ourselves as lovable—vary from family to family. In some families beauty is a criterion; in others, neatness, or athletic ability, or toughness are criteria. Consider that criteria like being dainty, or quiet, or talkative, or pious, or well-mannered, or academically precocious, etc., might constitute the criteria against which young children are judged lovable, worthy, and acceptable.

It is of course the right, if not the duty, of each family to establish what it considers to be the criteria against which esteem is accorded. The process and the patterns by which they are implemented are most likely unselfconscious in formulation as well as expression. One of our responsibilities as educators is to be sensitive to the family's own criteria. We may not agree with the family's definition of the "good boy" or the "good girl". But we would be very unwise to downgrade, undermine, or in other ways, violate the self-esteem criteria the children bring with them, even though we must help children acquire criteria which must serve to protect the welfare of the whole group in our care. I cannot think of any way in which it could help a child to have his respect for his family undermined.

I suggest that children have to have optimum self-esteem wherever they are, whether they are wealthy or poor, handicapped or normal, throughout their growing years.

*Proposition Three: Every child has to feel, or experience his/her life as worth living, reasonably satisfying, interesting and authentic.* I have in mind here the potential hazard inherent in modern industrialised societies of creating environments and experiences for young children which are superficial, phony, shallow and trivial.

This proposition suggests that we involve children in activities, and interactions about activities, which are real to them, significant to them and intrigue them. It suggests also that we resist the temptation to settle just for what amuses them. I would suggest as a criterion for children's activities that they are useful if they give children opportunities to operate on their own experiences, to reconstruct their own environments and if they give us opportunities to help children to learn what meanings to assign to their experiences.

As I visit early childhood programmes in both developed and developing countries, I am provoked to ponder whether people have taken our longstanding emphasis on warmth and kindness, acceptance and love to mean: Let's be nice to children. As I watch adults being nice and kind and gentle, I often speculate as to whether, if I were a child in such a pleasant environment, I would look at the adults and say to myself: "Everybody is kind and sweet, but inside them is there anybody home?"*

It seems to me that children should be able to feel that their lives are real, authentic, worth living and satisfying, whether they are at home, in schools or day-care centres throughout their growing years.

*Proposition Four: Young children need adults or older children who help them to make sense of their own experiences.* By the time we meet the young children in our care they have already acquired some understandings or constructions of their experiences. Their understandings or constructions may be incorrect or inaccurate although developmentally appropriate. As I see it, our major responsibility is to help the young to improve, extend, refine, develop and deepen their own understandings or constructions of their own worlds. As they grow older and reach primary-school age, we may help them with their understandings of other people's worlds. Indeed, increasing refinement and deepening of understandings is a lifelong process.

What do young children need or want to make sense of? Certainly people, what they do, what they will do next, how they feel; how things around them are made and how they work; how they themselves, and other living things grow; where people and things come from, and so forth. The list is endless.

If we are to help young children to improve and develop their understandings of their experiences we must *uncover* what those understandings are. The uncovering that we do, or that occurs as children engage in the activities we provide, helps us to make good decisions about what to cover, or what subsequent activities to plan.

Youngsters need help in making sense of their experiences wherever they are: at home, or in programmes, whatever their backgrounds, and throughout their growing years.

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* This theme is more fully developed in the Alice Creswick Memorial Lecture. (See page 41.)

*Proposition Five: Young children have to have adults who accept the authority that is theirs by virtue of their greater experience, knowledge and wisdom.* This proposition is based on the assumption that neither as parents nor as educators are we caught between the extremes of authoritarianism or permissiveness. Authoritarianism may be defined as the exercise of power without warmth, encouragement, or explanation. Permissiveness may be seen as the abdication of power, but offers children warmth, encouragement and support as they seem to need it. I am suggesting that young children have to have, instead of these extremes, adults who are *authoritative,* i.e., adults who exercise their very considerable power over the lives of young children *with* warmth, support, encouragement and adequate explanations. The concept of authoritativeness also includes treating children with respect, i.e., treating their opinions, feelings, wishes, and ideas, etc., as valid even when we disagree with them. To respect people we agree with is no great problem; respecting those whose ideas, wishes and feelings are different from ours may be a mark of wisdom in parents and genuine professionalism in teachers.

The combination of the exercise of optimum power and optimum warmth implied in authoritativeness is helpful for children, wherever they are, whatever their background, throughout their youth.

*Proposition Six: Young children need optimum association with adults and older children who exemplify the personal qualities we want them to acquire.* Make your own list of the qualities you want the young children in your care to acquire. There may be some differences among us. But it is likely that there are some qualities we all want all children to have, e.g., the capacity to care for and about others, honesty, kindness, acceptance of those who are different from themselves, the love of learning, and so forth.

This proposition suggests that we look around the children's environments and ask to what extent do our children have contact with people who exhibit these qualities? We might ask also: To what extent do our children observe people who are attractive and glamorous counter-examples of the qualities we want to foster? It seems to me that children need communities or societies which take the steps necessary in order to protect them from excessive exposure to violence and crime while their characters are still in formation.

The role and significance of adequate adult models seems valid for all children wherever they are, wherever they come from, throughout their developing years.

*Proposition Seven: Children need relationships or experiences with adults who are willing to take a stand on what is worth doing, worth having, worth knowing and caring about.* This proposition seems to belabour the obvious. But in an age of increasing emphasis on pluralism, multi-culturalism, and community participation, professionals are increasingly hesitant and apologetic about their own values. It seems to me that such hesitancy in taking a stand on what is worth while causes us to give our children unclear signals about what is expected and what is worth knowing and doing. When we do take a stand, it does not guarantee that our children will accept or agree with our version of the good life. Nor does it imply that we reject others' versions of the good life. We must, in fact, cultivate our capacities to respect alternative definitions of the worthwhile life. My point is that, when we take a stand with quiet conviction and courage, we help the young in that they can more easily see us as thinking and caring individuals who have enough self-respect to respect our own values as well as others'. I suggest that such thinking and caring adults are important to children wherever they are, wherever they come from, throughout development.

In summary, all seven propositions hang together on the central question to which the conference is addressed, namely to our responsibilities for the quality of the daily lives of all of our children—wherever they spend those days, throughout the long years of growth and development.

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**Policy Statement on Children's Services.** The Australian Pre-School Association, Canberra, Australia, 197[illegible]

KATZ, LILIAN G., "Notes on the Distinction Between Education and Excitement", in L. Katz, **The Second Collection of Papers for Teachers**. ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, 1976.

# Triennial Report by the President of the A.P.A.*

IF A.P.A. WERE one of those institutions which measured success in terms of money spent on an area of particular interest, the triennium since the last report was presented to the general meeting of A.P.A. has been highly successful.

Some of you may remember that at our last general meeting at Perth in August, 1972, we were still reeling under the announcement the week before in the Federal Budget that $5 million would be made available to subsidise centres for low-income families and others in special need ($5 million sounded such a lot of money).

In addition, the then Minister for Education, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, informed our president that the Commonwealth would share in capital and recurrent costs of the kindergarten teachers' colleges from the beginning of the 1973-74 financial year on the same basis as that applying to colleges of advanced education. In doing so, the McMahon Government was following the advice of the Senate Standing Committee on the Teacher Education Report which was released in February, 1972.

## CHILD CARE ACT

Just after we were home again after that wonderful Perth conference, the Child Care Act was brought down. This heralded a new era for non-profit organisations in the field of full day care; it made what seemed at the time, very generous provision of $1 million for research—and it named this association in the Act as having to approve the qualification of teachers in child care centres. Soon after this came the 1972 Federal elections, during which the then Opposition in a statement entitled "Labor's Way" stated that Government responsibility for education included the obligation to ensure that pre-school education was available to every child. The Labor policy speech prior to the 1972 election reiterated that pre-school education would be made available to every Australian child to remove or modify "the inequalities of background, environment, family income and family nationality". To administer this programme of national enrichment and national equality of opportunity a Pre-School Commission was to be established.

## COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

The rest is history. Details of the significant events are listed in the 1973, 1974 and 1975 Federal Officer's Reports and Diaries of Events.

Within this triennium there has been a procession of Governmental committees—the Child Care Standards Committee, the Advisory Committee for Child Care Research, the Australian Pre-Schools Committee, the Social Welfare Commission, the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission—all these produced reports and variations to policy the like of which had not hitherto been seen in Australia.

As well, all students in approved early childhood courses enjoy scholarships without bond or means test and free from tertiary fees.

The $5 million of August, 1972, grew to be $74 million in the 1975 Budget, while the first progress report of the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission (September, 1975) stated that "approximately 200,000 children will benefit from some 1,600 projects."

## SURVEYS AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

The first of the monumental tasks facing any government which intends to introduce a wholesale service is to obtain accurate statistics. It must know how many, where, what and through whom the services will function. In this regard, the report known as the Fry Report, *The Care and Education of Young Children*, despite its subsequent unpopularity with the Labor Party, made a notable contribution to educational planning. The Australian Council for Educational Research *Review* (Vol. 7, No. 4) states that: "During 1974 the most obvious outcomes in the field were in matters originally recommended by the Pre-Schools Committee, such as the training of teachers and teacher educators."

The Fry Report estimated that the number of children under five years of age in 1973 was 1,300,734; of this number, 111,991 were in pre-schools, while 30,293 were in full day care centres. There were approximately 3,300 centres (half and full day), in which 142,284 children were enrolled. It is a matter of regret that these estimates have not been updated nor validated in the two years since the Fry Report was issued.

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* The report was presented to a general meeting of the Australian Pre-School Association on 16 May 1976 by the association's president, Lady (Vincent) Fairfax.

With this in mind, the executive, at its March, 1976, meeting, approved a submission to Senator Margaret Guilfoyle, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister in Child Care Matters, seeking funds to conduct a national conference on children's services and a survey of children's services currently available.

A.P.A. made estimates in April, 1975, which showed that approximately 151,496 children under five years were enrolled in 3,365 centres.

Hence it appears that, under the Child Care Act (1972), the Interim Committee for the Children's Commission have provided for an additional 49,000 children (approximately) in some of the varied forms of children's services.

## FINANCE

A.P.A.'s share of increased Federal funds has risen as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1972-73 | .... .... | $27,800 |
| 1975-76 | .... .... | $56,000 |

The Lady Gowrie Child Centres Grants:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1972-73 | .... .... | $231,000 |
| 1975-76 | .... .... | $410,000 |

Bearing in mind the rate of inflation during these years, the increase is not as dramatic as it appears, nor does it allow for the extension of work which we see is waiting to be done by a national voluntary agency.

Development plans for the association have been discussed by the executive and will be reported on briefly later in this report.

## CARE AND EDUCATION

What do we mean by success in relation to the care and education of young children?

To be successful, we believe that the care and education of young children outside their own homes must be related to an individual child's age, development, view of the world and the expectations that society has for its children.

Each child and each family have rights and needs which are peculiar to each individual child and each individual family, as well as those needs that are held in common with others in the particular community. True educators of young children are concerned with fostering the development of emotional attitudes, basic skills, positive health and welfare which are necessary for the present and future well-being of young children and their families.

From this it follows that the care and education of children cannot be mass-produced, and they are only as effective as the teachers and leaders in the children's services.

## COLLEGES

It is impossible to report in detail on what were Kindergarten Teachers' Colleges because, with increased Government help, most have become Colleges of Advanced Education and the number of training centres has increased from six in 1972 to thirty-two in 1976.

In some areas the expansion has been too rapid and has resulted in a surplus of teachers. Pre-School centres have not expanded at the same rate, and a factor which should be highlighted is the major increases in pre-school teachers' awards in each State.

However, this association constantly requested this expansion in training, and we accept the fact that there were insufficient pre-school teachers with the necessary qualities of leadership when the political push and funds came. We must ask ourselves if such a rapid expansion of training produces the mature leaders required if the goals we see as important are to be achieved.

## LADY GOWRIE CHILD CENTRES

This association has the responsibility for the supervision of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres. It is a matter of pride that they have responded to the demands and challenges of this new era, and have coped with a trebled number of tertiary students and visitors, as well as extending their facilities in different directions.

The greater the increase in the number of institutions offering courses in early childhood education, the greater is the need for the Gowrie Centres to maintain an independent study and demonstration of the best possible standards in the care and education of young children.

The enrolments of children have risen from 370 in 1971 to 695 in 1975 and students' usage from 4,720 in 1971 to 13,660 in 1975.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

It was significant that the first emphasis in the Labor Government's programme for pre-school education changed from the child-centred goal for equal opportunity "and compensatory education" of the 1972 policy speech to the 1973 policy of the Surfers' Paradise convention with its aim "to provide community support for women to participate more fully in society".

Much greater emphasis has been placed on integrated services, and funds from the Interim Com-

## 6 *The Young Child in Focus*

mittee for the Children's Commission have been channelled towards those centres whose accommodation is utilised for the whole day in the care of young children.

The Children's Commission Act was passed in 1975, but only three sections of the Act have been proclaimed, so virtually the Act is not in operation. Until Sir Henry Bland's report is tabled, it will not be known what the future of either the commission or the interim committee will be. It would be presumptuous to offer a "final solution to the last two years of indecision and controversy", but presumption is a quality a voluntary organisation must have.

Having pioneered once, colonised perhaps, but without any settlement, we, as a voluntary organisation must begin again to pioneer ways of resolving the conflicts of the next triennium.

A.P.A. has not been as aloof from change as some of its critics maintain. The first efforts to bridge the gap between full day care and part-time kindergartens were made in 1951.

### ABORIGINAL PRE-SCHOOLING

It must be rated as a landmark when, in 1974, the Departments of Education and Aboriginal Affairs called together a group of pre-school advisers from all States and Territories for a one-day discussion of trends, followed the next year by a two-day seminar, planned and contributed to by consultants and advisers in Aboriginal pre-schools on the subject of "The Involvement and Training of Aboriginal Women and Girls in Pre-School Work".

The 1976 meeting will concentrate on "Resource Materials for Use in Aboriginal Pre-Schooling". The Education Director of A.P.A. is fortunate to be included in this group and to be invited to contribute.

At the Seminar in June, 1975, organised by the Departments of Aboriginal Affairs and Education, the A.P.A. was requested to produce a book similar to *First Steps*. Its purpose would be to explain predominantly through photographs, the purpose of children attending pre-schools, and the activities in which they would be involved. It would be distributed mainly to Aboriginal parents, especially those whose children were not attending pre-schools.

A submission for funds to publish the book, entitled *Growing and Learning*, was made in December, 1975, and verbal approval received in early March. At the time of writing this report, all preparatory work has been completed, and printing will proceed as soon as written notification comes to hand.

### PUBLICATIONS

Parents' News Sheets continue to sell at the rate of 200,000 copies a year, and 289 titles have been issued since 1944. Several Parents' News Sheets were translated into Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish and Serbo-Croat during the year, and distributed to branches.

A list of all A.P.A. publications, with an order form to fill in, has been printed.

We were all very sad when the wonderful Melbourne voluntary group had to give up the production of the *Quarterly Journal* in 1974. We were without a Journal for over a year, but it was felt that there was a real need for this publication. A journal committee was formed in Canberra and a considerable effort by the A.P.A. executive, journal committee, and national office staff, has gone into the project of establishing a national journal related to early childhood services in Australia. The result is the *Australian Journal of Early Childhood* which will be published quarterly, in March, June, September and November of each year. The first edition is now available. The production is being financed by subscriptions, of which there are over 1,000 at the time of writing of this report, and a grant from the Bushell Trust, which will provide up to $6,800 in 1976 to meet initial publishing costs. Subscription in 1976 for the four issues is $5, including postage.

Each issue of the *Journal* will have a special theme. The one used in the first issue was "Integrated Children's Services", and the second theme will be on "The Politics of Early Childhood".

A *Policy Statement* has been produced following recommendations made at the May, 1975, executive (council) meeting. This booklet was published from funds provided by the Gladys Pendred Memorial Trust. It states the aims, objectives and policies of the association on matters pertaining to the care and education of young children in its broadest sense.

### ALICE CRESWICK SCHOLARSHIP

Two scholars received awards in 1975. Miss Judy McDonell was enabled to study at Bank Street, New York, and Mrs. Anne Petriwskyj (nee Perrett) studied at Monash University, Melbourne. They have both returned to positions in early childhood areas.

Miss McDonell holds the position of lecturer at the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College and Mrs. Petriwskyj the position of regional pre-school adviser in Central Queensland for the Creche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland.

Reports from the two scholars are held in national office.

The Kindergarten Union of South Australia has established the Jean Denton Memorial Fund to further studies in research to commemorate the work of the late Mrs. Denton. I would here like to pay a special tribute to the contribution Jean Denton made to the pre-school field during her lifetime—not only when she was the president.

Details of this scholarship have been published in the first issue of the Journal.

### O.M.E.P.

Interest in O.M.E.P. has continued steadily in all States and Territories. In some States interdisciplinary meetings have been held involving paediatricians, nurses, social workers and other agencies.

Dr. Isla Stamp and Mrs. Ellie Pullin attended the World Council meetings held in Paris in November, 1975. They also attended the seminar entitled "In the Best Interests of the Child", which followed the meetings.

The Australian Pre-School Association has invited O.M.E.P. to hold a world council meeting in Melbourne in 1978. The sub-committee has already undertaken some investigations as regards facilities and expenses. The two days of council meetings would be followed by a two-day seminar for a select group of about 200 people who are particularly interested in O.M.E.P. from A.P.A. branches.

### NATIONAL OFFICE

In August, 1975, Mr. Alan Holmes was appointed executive director of the association and in January, 1976, Mrs. Rosemary Brown was appointed education director. We welcome them both and feel confident that the work of the association is in very competent hands.

### DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The major changes in the early childhood area in the last three years, and the considerable expansion of services, mean that A.P.A. must re-examine its role and responsibilities if it is to continue to be effective as a major national co-ordinating body. A paper prepared by Mr. Alan Holmes on the future development of A.P.A. was submitted to the executive meeting in November, 1975, and was subsequently sent to branches with the request that certain areas be discussed and commented upon. Without giving all the details, the results from branch discussions, the March executive meeting and the council meeting just ended have resulted in the following:

1. Several submissions being made to Senator Guilfoyle for (a) the national conference and survey already noted; (b) additional staff at the national office to work on various aspects of development; (c) a national resource information service.
2. A new standing committee structure for the organisation which would provide for a greater feeling of national involvement by branches.
3. A decision for all branches to re-examine their membership provisions. Under our new constitution for the national body, provision is made for "any national voluntary organisation, whether incorporated or not, which subscribes to the objects of the Association".
4. A decision for all branches to discuss the name of the association in terms of whether it correctly reflects the broad aims and objectives of the association in the early childhood field.

This is a very brief survey and summary of the four years since the last general meeting of the association. The progress and the setbacks of these difficult years are set out in the annual federal officer's reports of 1973, 1974 and 1975 and the annual report of 1976, and for this we are all indebted to Mrs. Loma Rudduck who was our federal officer over these years and had many hard battles to fight on behalf of the association.

I would like to pay special tribute to her for the contribution she made to the work of this association during her term of office — also to Dr. Isla Stamp, who came to our rescue, at great personal inconvenience, and was a tower of strength at a difficult time. We are grateful, too, for the hard work and loyalty given by Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Deans and Mrs. Bibo at national office.

I would like to record my personal thanks to my fellow executive members — my deputy president, Mrs. Evan Thomson, the vice-presidents, Mrs. Whitney King, Miss Florence Kendall and Mrs. Joyce McConnell, and Mr. Don Burdett, the honorary treasurer. We were sorry when our Canberra vice-president, Dr. Stewart Houston, had to resign, but we are happy that Mrs. McConnell has been able to take his place.

The association is particularly indebted to Mr. Don Burdett, our honorary treasurer, for the hours of advice and help on financial matters that he gives us.

A.P.A. is now incorporated and we are operating under a new constitution. For the legal work that went into these two pieces of legislation we are all extremely grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Whitney King.

I should also like to record our thanks to our honorary auditors, Messrs. Peat, Marwick and Mitchell of Canberra.

—LADY (VINCENT) FAIRFAX

# Report of the O.M.E.P. Sub-Committee of A.P.A.*

IT GIVES ME a great deal of pleasure to present to you a report for nearly four years of the activity of the O.M.E.P. sub-committee of the Australian Pre-School Association.

Those of you who are new to this international aspect of our work will be interested to know that, from the inception of O.M.E.P. in 1946, Australia has had a lively connection. Miss Joan Fry was in Europe at that time and available to attend those inaugural deliberations.

Since 1961, our O.M.E.P. sub-committee of A.P.A., based in Melbourne, has built up a network of links with liaison officers in all States and Territories, and these officers, through their enthusiasm and their ingenuity, have succeeded in raising funds in this recent period, as the following figures show:

| | |
|---|---|
| Raised 1/7/73-30/4/76 .... | $10,366.66 |
| Spent 1/7/73-30/4/76 .... | $10,212.82 |
| Balance in hand .... .... | $2,394.86 |
| Plus amount owing for films | $481.00 |

Within that remaining balance lies a reserve contributed for the making of another film, as certain moneys were donated specifically for that purpose.

In addition, some States have contributed generously to ventures of benefit to children:

—the wonderful work by New South Wales of supporting orphan children in Vietnam through the Gordon Barclay Vietnam Fund, and now a child through World Vision;

—the work in Western Australia for placement of Aboriginal children and other underprivileged children in kindergartens, and the work of their mobile unit;

—the enthusiasm of the South Australian committee, using World Children's Day as a focal point, for raising a great deal of money, some of which has gone to assist work in New Guinea, and more recently in Western Samoa;

—Queensland—through the superb ability and enthusiasm of Miss Peggy Banff, carries guidance to Aboriginal children in that State.

All States and Territories have assisted with the donations sent to establish a permanent secretariat in Paris. Australia has a great deal to gain by the smooth running of such an office, and you will be pleased to know that one of the things bought with our donations was a first-class Gestetner, secured at the right price through our permanent Australian delegate, Mrs. Gillian Beddington. Our money also helped, along with U.K. and U.S.A., to keep the door open late last year, and earlier this year, when problems beset the world president, Dr. Margaret Devine.

Many other private donations have been made to our funds, along with cost of printing and the many hours of voluntary help given so willingly for many purposes, and these are gratefully acknowledged by the sub-committee.

On the world front, World Council meetings have been held in Hungary in 1973, Venezuela in 1974, and Paris in 1975, with a full World Assembly following the Venezuela meetings. Dr. Isla Stamp attended all of these, and Miss Margaret Chase, Miss R. Stribling and Mrs. D. Summers attended the assembly. I attended the Paris meetings, and the seminar which followed, proceedings of which will be available later in the year on order from the convener.

Dr. Isla Stamp held the position of vice-president for the Pacific-Far East Region for three years and was succeeded in January, 1975, by myself.

There will be an additional challenge for the next two years; that is to carry into effect the holding in Melbourne, Australia, for the first time, an O.M.E.P. World Council meeting, and I trust that my sub-committee will be given much help and support from all States and Territories.

In closing, may I quote to you, two paragraphs from early O.M.E.P. statements?

> O.M.E.P. has inscribed in its name the word "Education", which makes it distinct from other Child Welfare Organisations, in order to stress with psychologists the importance it sets on early education, never stopping, however, to care first of all for the child's health; but the fundamental needs of little ones are not only of a physiological type, they are also of affective, social and intellectual kind. Mental hygiene is no less im-

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* This report, covering the period from 1 July 1973 to 30 April 1976, was presented to the general meeting of the A.P.A. on 16 May by Mrs Ellie V. Pullin, M.B.E., Convener of the O.M.E.P. sub-committee of the A.P.A. and Vice-President of O.M.E.P. for the Pacific-Far East Region. O.M.E.P. is the World Council for Early Childhood Education.

portant than physical hygiene. It is why O.M.E.P. gathers, and here is one of its particulars: educators and pediatricians, psychologists and psychiatrists, parents and interested associations, architects and all those who take interest in childhood and its problems. Besides, the O.M.E.P. world organisation is keen on preparing the child to international understanding.

. . . in order to reach O.M.E.P.'s aims, we must gather not only educators, but parents, pediatricians, psychologists, architects, representatives of public authorities, all those who are interested in pre-school education and who take part in the organisation of the surroundings of the child. Therefore, a national committee must strive to be the meeting place of those so various personalities. In order that they be fully representative, it is desirable that solicited people should represent all organisations . . .

—ELLIE V. PULLIN, M.B.E.

# Integration of Handicapped Children in Schools

By ROSEMARY BROWN*

WE HEAR THE TERM "integration" used so frequently today and to mean so many things that I would have preferred to use another word. In this talk, to me the term "integration" is used as in one of the Oxford Dictionary meanings to "make whole".

We would all agree that handicapped children have an equal right with normal children to receive education.

The broad goals of education are the same for all—to help the child to develop into an independent self-respecting individual who can perform a useful role in society.

With this aim in view, we cannot expect handicapped children to adjust to life in the community when adult if they are segregated in isolated groups during their pre-school and school years. In fact, we may as well not attempt to educate them at all and leave them in homes or institutions for physical care.

Some severely handicapped children of course, will never reach this goal, will never be able to integrate in society as adults, but this does not negate the validity of integration in the early years.

Also for such children, those with severe physical and intellectual handicaps, integration cannot be total. These children learn slowly and require much individual instruction and training. The amount of integration in normal groups that these children can have depends entirely on each child's individual ability to cope.

BUT children with minimal brain dysfunction and such symptoms as:

—speech problems
—poor co-ordination
—hyperactivity
—perceptual difficulties
—vision and hearing difficulties
—mild cerebral palsy
—mild intellectual retardation

should, I believe, always be integrated with normal children in the early years.

## ADVANTAGES

The advantages are many and obvious.

Children themselves are teachers.

Children learn from each other. The child with a handicapping problem learns normal play patterns, learns to follow routines, to develop socially acceptable behaviour, to understand what it is to be one of a group (living in a community).

In fact through observing and emulating other children the handicapped children begin to learn what all children are learning.

*Socialisation.*—One of the most important of all attributes in adult life is developed through a feeling of security and belonging in a peer group.

Another most important attribute in adult life is the ability to communicate through speech. Children with handicaps often have speech problems—poor speech or no speech. And no matter how much adults may vocalise with the child or how much speech therapy he may have, the greatest impetus that can be given to a child's speech pattern is exposure to the spontaneous talking, shouting, laughing and vocalising of other children. We all know how this applies to all children, how quickly they pick up often words we would rather they did not. Integrating with normal children stimulates language development in handicapped children far better than any teacher can.

*Families.*—We cannot consider the child in isolation. Families of handicapped children, often feel isolated, rejected, different. If their child is attending a normal pre-school, they, too, during the early years of their child's education have a sense of belonging in the community.

Parents become more confident in the handling of a difficult child when they can see the child with his teacher and other children. They and the teacher can share the problems, so that the education of the child becomes a two-way process, a learning programme for both child and parents.

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* Mrs Brown, Education Director of the Australian Pre-School Association, presented this paper at the general meeting of the A.P.A.

## IDEAL

Ideally I would like to see no more special schools built. I would like to see special units attached to schools for those children who require special facilities and can benefit only from partial integration. Handicapped and "at-risk" children require a combination of individual instruction and integration in their education programmes.

The areas of the programme from which children receive the most stimulation from integration are such as:
—music
—dramatic play
—water play
—sand play
—any messy play
—excursions.

Individual instruction must be based on each child's needs and planned to involve the damaged areas in a way that the child is able to achieve success.

## OTHER DISCIPLINES

Educating the handicapped child is always a multidisciplinary project. In order to cater for all areas of need, the child may require:
—physiotherapy
—occupational therapy
—speech therapy
—medical supervision.

In some cases a child may need to attend a centre which is equipped to provide these services, but in most cases it should be possible for the multidisciplinary team to visit the children in their local schools.

## POINTS AGAINST

When overseas I discussed "integration" with people concerned with the education of the handicapped.

Arguments against from school principals:

1. *Educational levels can only be raised by intensive training; therefore the children lag behind when integrated in a larger group.* This can be overcome by one-to-one sessions each day. Extra support staff is necessary for a teacher to work individually with children.

2. *Too much emotional pressure on the handicapped child in trying to keep up with the group.* There are advantages in more than one handicapped child in group. Teacher expertise is required here.

3. *The children receive too much help from other children and are therefore not encouraged to become independent.* I believe that with the right amount of teacher support the children will wish to become independent. The normal children can learn to be careful over this.

4. *They become too conscious of their difference and are content to remain different.* In many cases they must learn to face the fact that they are different.

5. *Parents are pushing for integration.* If this is the case, then they are clever parents. They know more than anyone else that their children cannot ever reach the goals set by educators without the opportunity for early integration with normal peers.

# Post-Graduate Study Abroad

By JUDY McDONELL*

As I REFLECT on my eighteen months of study at Bank Street College of Education and life in International House in New York City as an Alice Creswick Australian Pre-School Association Scholar, many rich and exciting encounters make an impact on my mind. The total experience was extremely stimulating and challenging and the various influences on my thinking were integrated and dovetailed very meaningfully together.

As a result of this broad overview one can ask numerous questions:

1. What did the experience mean to me personally?
2. What did I gain in terms of professional growth?
3. What insights made an impact on my thinking?
4. How did I see those insights in perspective?
5. How will those insights in perspective influence my role in the field of early childhood?

While reflecting on the totality of my experiences, I will endeavour to answer these questions.

My Alice Creswick Scholarship enabled me to pursue the professional studies and the practical field-work experiences which are the requirements for a Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education at Bank Street College of Education, and at the same time encounter the dynamics and diversity of a rich cultural city, New York. Terrific, terrifying, unbelievable and overwhelming are just a few of my immediate reactions to life in New York City. I was delighted, however, that I chose to study at Bank Street and live at International House as I have reaped the benefits of the total experience many times over. As I analyse the components of these unique experiences the impact becomes even more meaningful.

I feel it would be meaningful to look at the various components that did influence my thinking, but it is the integration of these components that makes the total impact.

A. Masters studies at Bank Street College of Education: (a) course work; (b) child study; (c) thesis study.

B. Field-work teaching experiences.

C. Conferences that I was fortunate enough to attend.

D. Life as a graduate student in International House—which was a unique experience in itself.

## A. MASTERS STUDIES AT BANK STREET

My Alice Creswick Scholarship was awarded to pursue my masters degree in Early Childhood Education at Bank Street College of Education, New York.

Bank Street offers a wide diversity of courses and related experiences, and I had the difficulty of determining the areas on which I would focus. A period of study such as this could become very fragmented, and so I had to think of the experiences in terms of the encounters that I felt would have relevance in my area of work in the early childhood scene in Australia. The field of teacher education is in itself concerned with a diversity of issues, but in this light I pursued my course of study.

The Bank Street course of early childhood has a strong child-development and child-study core which I feel is a strength of the Bank Street philosophy. The courses chosen from set areas of curriculum proved to be stimulating and challenging.

### *Unique Valuing of the Individual Person*

My studies at Bank Street were rich and rewarding, and I experienced the feeling of being really valued as a person. The valuing of the individual person permeated the total Bank Street philosophy and it was evident from the graduate education programmes with mature students right down to the teacher-child interaction in the classrooms of the three-years-olds in the Bank Street School for children. What did this personal valuing and concern for my professional accomplishments mean to me as a student? On entering the Bank Street course, I was assigned an adviser who worked along with me in planning my course of studies. It was at this point that the developmental match principle was so thoughtfully and meaningfully implemented. I was able to pursue my course work studies in the light of material and content that I personally felt was going to meet my own professional growth needs and interests. Educational growth in this environment became a shared enterprise.

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* Miss McDonell is Lecturer in Early Childhood Development and Education, Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College. She was an Alice Creswick Australian Pre-School Association Scholar in 1975. Her paper was presented at the general meeting of the A.P.A.

At this point one might ask, "What is the overall nature of the course as a whole?"

The courses were concerned with (i) professional insights and skills related to the strategies of teaching; (ii) the personal growth and development of the individual.

The strength of personal growth lies in the advisement process and the personal interaction in group and individual conference sessions. The admissions process at Bank Street is quite extensive, and personal interviews, aptitude tests and personal biographies are concerned with the personal qualities of the student. The Bank Street faculty then see themselves as committed to the growth of the developing and emerging teacher.

I strongly feel that in the field of early childhood we should not be concerned with academic qualities alone. Personal qualities are vital in the teaching role and we need people with a deep commitment to the nurturing and developing of young children.

This quality was reflected in the nature of students in the early childhood Masters programme at Bank Street.

I can also ask the question, "What relevance did embarking on a wide range of courses from child development through to courses raising questions about issues and perspectives in curriculum development have to me as an early childhood educator?" Through the stimulating and challenging presentation of course sessions I was motivated to personally question the material being presented and to see it in perspective from my own personal frame of reference. Post-graduate study provides the opportunity for time to think, reflect and question, to be involved in group discussion, to read deeply and pursue areas of interest in depth and then to reflect again.

I personally feel that this was one of the significant attributes of full-time study. I do realise that not all people have the opportunity for full-time study, but it was really a unique experience for me to find time to think and reflect.

It was through this reflecting that I felt I gained so much in terms of my own personal development. Previous to my embarking on my Master studies at Bank Street I was a lecturer in early childhood development and education at the Brisbane Kindergarten Teachers' College. It was a unique opportunity to reverse my roles a little and find this time to think deeply about significant issues. I am sure that I now have a greater sensitivity and feeling of the needs of students.

### *Student-Teacher (Lecturer) Advisement Process*

The student-teacher relationship to me was one of the unique qualities of the Masters programme at Bank Street College of Education. The advisement programme in Bank Street Teacher Education and Masters Programmes, is seen as a means of integrating the Bank Street philosophy into its practical sphere. Bank Street's philosophy and approach to education is based on a developmental interaction theory.

"Developmental refers to the belief that there are identifiable patterns of growth and modes of perceiving and responding which are characterised by increasing differentiation and progressive integration as a function of chronological age."[1] Interaction refers to the fact that various aspects of development, affective, cognitive, social and aesthetic, are seen to be very much integrated and interrelated rather than hierarchical and that development proceeds from or by means of interaction on the part of the individual with his physical environment and with other people.

"The values underlying this approach are humanistic, stressing the development of the 'whole' person with his sense of self-esteem, autonomy and relatedness to other people as well as growth of cognitive function."[2] This is the approach in the early childhood classrooms, but this philosophy is also translated into the advisement process in the graduate programme.

Regular meetings with advisers became real sharing experiences, where educational dialogue transpired.

### *Group Sharing Experience*

The personal advisement programme also developed into a group sharing experience where small groups of students who also shared the same adviser met for group discussion. The basic philosophy of physical activity and interaction among people was carried through to group conference sessions.

In these sessions students were able as a group to exchange information and share in reflective thinking and problem-solving related to their own teaching experiences and course work and to test out adult interaction on affective as well as cognitive levels in the group interactive sessions.

At this point I could ask the question, "What did encountering experiences of this nature mean to me?" As a teacher educator I was:

1. Looking closely at techniques of advisers.
2. Observing how the adviser influenced the group interactive process.
3. Observing how the adviser elicited responses from the students and how I might implement or be influenced by some of these techniques.

The question that then can be raised is, "How might this sharing experience be transferred and implemented in an early childhood education setting?" It is significant to note that this unique sharing experience was valued in the Bank Street School for Children, and the City and Country School. These were schools in which I taught as part of my Masters field-work teaching experiences. Eleven- and twelve-year-old children in these schools worked individually with four- and five-year-olds, helping them in their adjustment, interacting with them in the learning setting and sharing experiences with them. I personally felt that this was a most valuable sharing experience from the point of view of both age groups.

We, as early child educators, must be concerned with the affective and social needs of the young child. Dr. Katz in her opening address referred to the encounters that children need to experience in their daily lives. They need the opportunity to experience and feel a sense of self-esteem. Dr. Katz also stated that she felt that children needed adults and other children to make sense of their experiences.

## B. FIELD WORK TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate study provides one with many unique opportunties, but one major component of significance to me was to find oneself back in the classroom setting as a teacher (after having been involved in the field of teacher education). I was particularly privileged to find myself in such interesting early childhood settings where there was a real interest in the personal growth and development of the individual. (At first I felt very apprehensive about embarking on my teaching experience, but it proved to be a most enriching experience, as the teachers I worked with so kindly shared their professional insights and understandings about their classroom and the children with me.) I found it even more interesting to reflect on my experiences in these schools in the light of other so-called early childhood programmes that I was fortunate to observe during my time in New York City.

### *Diversity of Early Childhood Education Programmes*

The scope of early childhood programmes in New York City is quite extensive. As early childhood educators, we have all become fully aware that increased knowledge gained from research and observational study of the development of children during the early years has led to viewing the young child in a new perspective. These new insights have resulted in programmes embarking on a broad range of objectives and diverse educational teaching strategies. It is interesting to note, however, that there are early childhood education programmes that have a strong philosophical base, that have remained virtually unchanged in their emphasis over the years and yet would be regarded as progressive in their orientation today. Through the decades, insight into the area of learning and development of young children has influenced the teaching strategies of City and Country and the Bank Street for Children, but their philosophical base has remained strongly rooted in the values to which they so strongly adhere.

The question that then ensues is, "What was the value to me of becoming so involved in these teaching field placements?" I found myself continually questioning and analysing more deeply the early childhood programmes that I was observing. One particular setting in which I observed was a Montessori American Early Childhood Classroom, where definite Montessori procedures with sensorial didactic teaching experiences influenced distinct teaching strategies. Children moved seriously from one experience to another in a disciplined manner, acting upon their materials in sequenced order and control with a minimum of teacher-child interaction and very limited child-child interaction. "How does this learning climate complement my knowledge of children as thinkers and learners during the early childhood years? Is social interaction a significant component in the learning process?" This, I feel can only be viewed in the light of one's own personal philosophy and theoretical frame of reference.

One can also ask similar questions as a result of visiting more cognitively oriented early childhood programmes. I also observed in early childhood centres in New York where segments of teacher-directed experiences formed the central core of the programme. There were experiences of segments of intense oral drill with spontaneous verbal responses from the child with very little emphasis on the child interacting with his environment. One significant point that I feel I must stress, however, is that many of these early childhood programmes were designed exclusively and explicitly for so-called disadvantaged children.

I visited quite a diversity of programmes in early childhood education in New York City:

1. Head Start programmes.
2. Follow-through programmes.
3. Handicapped children integrated into a mainstreaming programme.
4. Schools for children who were emotionally disturbed.
5. A variety of programmes with an emphasis on cognitive learning.

Analysing and questioning these orientations, I found myself deeply influenced by a Deweyan philosophy that was at the base of the City and Country School and Bank Street School for Children.

Block-building formed a central core in the learning environment in the early childhood classrooms in both of these schools. A deep commitment of education "for and by experience" was at the root of the Dewey philosophy. Here I was able to see the real emphasis on learning by doing and children attempting to reconstruct experiences that had relevance and meaning to them through their manipulation and action upon blocks. Education by experience had both passive and active components. It became clearly evident to me that active exploration, manipulation and symbolisation are very significant components, but the undergoing of the experience must be internalised if the "doing" is to be meaningful to the individual.

Since the beginnings of the City and Country School by Caroline Pratt, and the Bank Street School for Children by Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Harriet Johnson, an evolution of educational thought has transpired, but those basic values previously outlined are still firmly adhered to. It was particularly stimulating to realise that Caroline Pratt designed multiple-unit blocks for her early childhood classrooms and these blocks are now standard equipment in our kindergarten rooms in Australia today. Her blocks were the outgrowth of children's insistent demands for material with which they could play, build, dramatise and reconstruct situations that had meaning for them. Inbuilt into her ingeniously designed and engineered multiple-unit blocks were many possibilities for learning-potential still deemed valuable in today's educational circles.

### *Child Study*

As I continually interacted in these early childhood settings, my thoughts about emerging teaching strategies in the light of philosophical values were continually being reinforced. Values of autonomy, flexibility and responsibility for one's own decisions were fostered in involving students in defining goals for their own competencies and their action as teachers in a classroom setting. Child study was at the root of my work in the City and Country School, integrating my Bank Street courses and my fieldwork experiences very meaningfully. It was a unique opportunity as a teacher to stand back from the involved interactions of the learning environment and closely observe a child and then attempt to see the significance of these observations as they had implications for planning in an educational setting.

Child-study techniques were a strength of the Bank Street philosophy and were strongly influenced by the work of Dr. Dorothy Cohen and Dr. Barbara Biber.

"What did it mean to me embarking on an in-depth child study?" I now feel a much greater sensitivity towards the skills students need to develop in this area. On numerous occasions I have asked the question, "What are we asking students to do in the area of child study skills?"

This opportunity to become deeply involved in child-study techniques was a unique encounter for me.

### *Thesis Study*

An individual independent thesis study is also a component of the Masters programme. The individualised thesis study allowed me to analyse the interaction of dramatic play and block-building very closely and to see blocks and block-building as an important arena for aiding the child in his or her ability to symbolise and reconstruct experiences. This study has challenged me to view the inherent potential in block-building in a new perspective.

"What value is a thesis study other than a lot of hard work?" It revealed to me that one gains quite a deal of satisfaction in an in-depth study of this nature:

1. Researching more deeply into an area of interest brings deep satisfaction and greater knowledge of an area of interest.
2. Skills in the clarity of one's own thinking synthesising and evaluating are also meaningfully developed.
3. I also deeply appreciated the shared input of my adviser into my thesis project, challenging and stimulating my thinking.

### *Child Care Practice Teaching Experience*

During my field teaching placements I also had a short experience in a setting in which an experimental child-care programme was being pioneered. A day-care experience was integrated into a sessional-based kindergarten programme. It was an interesting opportunity to be involved in staff discussion and analysis of the effectiveness of the organisational patterns. It was valuable to be exposed to issues and challenges of this nature.

### *Bank Street Diversity*

I feel I have not really done justice to the wide diversity of components of the Bank Street complex. I will just briefly outline the various components and divisions at Bank Street.

1. Bank Street School for Children.
2. Bank Street Graduates Programme: (i) Early Childhood Education; (ii) Elementary Education; (iii) Special Education; (iv) Infancy Programme; (v) Guidance Programme; (vi) Museum Education.

3. Bank Street Research Division—Follow-Through Programme.
4. Bank Street Leadership Programme.
5. Bank Street Publications—Films, Readers.

I don't have the time to pursue the nature of these important dimensions in depth.

## C. EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCES IN THE UNITED STATES

I was fortunate during my period of study in the United States to attend the N.A.E.Y.C. (National Association for the Education of Young Children) and the A.C.E.I. (Association for Childhood Education International) conferences.

It was quite an experience to be one of many thousands of early childhood educators at a national U.S. conference. For an Australian, in particular, it is also an opportunity to meet personally with many of the leading writers in the early childhood field. Authors of books become real people and this enables you to have a more sensitive feeling towards their work.

## D. INTERNATIONAL HOUSE

It would be impossible to conclude the influences of my overseas experience without making reference to my life at International House as a graduate student.

Life at International House was an educational experience in itself. Socially, intellectually and educationally, life's experiences became integrated into a meaningful whole. Personally I find it difficult to divorce my professional studies from life in general. Many students from Bank Street College lived at International House and so my studies and motivations of Bank Street carried over into my life at International House.

It was a unique experience to share insights and conversation with students from so many different cultures and far-reaching parts of the world. I became very actively involved in the student council of International House and this provided me with many unique opportunities to develop organisational skills and experience in working with people with many different points of view. We initiated educational meetings, shared insights and analysed topics and areas of concern from our various orientations.

Our educational interests culminated in a Harlem Tutorial Programme in which we provided an enrichment programme for so-called disadvantaged children from our immediate neighbourhood, Harlem. Bank Street students, along with students from Teachers' College, Columbia University, and students from programmes of related disciplines shared their insights about the basic personal and educational needs of the young child.

Life at International House for me complemented many of my concerns about the nature of people as individuals and the need for these individuals to interact at an international level if educational understanding is to be achieved.

Life was not without its anxious moments: New York to me is like a paradox, exciting on the one hand and challenging on the other. As I apprehensively walked the streets of New York I endeavoured to see the totality of everyday life in perspective. New York has the total population of Australia in an area just twelve miles long and approximately one and a quarter to one and a half miles wide. I really found it difficult to accept the reality of the situation, but it did give me a greater understanding of the children with whom I was working. One must accept the challenges of living in a dynamic city such as New York.

### *Impact of the Total Experience*

The early childhood scene in New York and the United States is so immense that it was only possible to focus on certain issues. I endeavoured to do this in the light of experiences and encounters in perspective, that would be meaningful to me in my work in the early childhood field of teacher education. Overseas study of the nature that I encountered enabled me to meet with colleagues in the field of early childhood education and other related disciplines. Considerable dialogue transpired as I encountered people from many different countries of the world and a diversity of cultural backgrounds.

Study at Bank Street College was stimulating and challenging. Reflecting on the benefits of my total experience, I find myself deeply analysing the various components as they become meaningfully integrated. It is as one builds upon experiences that growth occurs.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Australian Pre-school Association. It was an honour to study abroad as an Alice Creswick, Australian Pre-school scholar. I sincerely hope that I can contribute to the early childhood field in a meaningful way.

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# Parental Involvement in Education

By Dr. TESSA BLACKSTONE*

IN INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES all round the world there is pressure to increase educational provision for children below compulsory school age. And governments and others are responding to this pressure, often all too slowly, by expanding early childhood education. This paper will not discuss this expansion as such. Instead it discusses an important issue about which there has been growing awareness in the context of that expansion. This is parental involvement in the education of young children.

One implication of the extension of the school system downwards is in effect a change in the balance between the parental and the professional educator's contribution to the socialisation and instruction of young children. It comes at the same time as other changes are taking place in the balance between the respective roles of parent and professional in education. The old assumption often made by both teachers and parents that "teacher knows best" is increasingly under challenge. The part that parents might play in schools is being explored more and more frequently and, rather than being passive recipients of information, parents are seen by some as active participants in the education process.

There is, then, a tension at work which will be played out in the implementation of the new nursery education programme: while there are attempts to extend the influence of educational institutions, the rightful power of professionals over those institutions is being questioned.

At the same time nursery education is particularly well suited to experiments with parental involvement. Traditions of at least some contact between a mother and her child's teacher are strongest in nursery schools and classes. The need for a child to be taken to and fetched from school, the informal structure of the school day and the flexible nature of the curriculum all lower the barriers between parents and teachers. Attendance at a nursery class is not compulsory. Parents of nursery children have made a voluntary choice that their children should attend school. Further, the parents of young children are particularly interested in their children's school experience, partly because at this stage their children are more dependent on them emotionally than later.

There is a historical tendency for ideas and methods from nursery education to infiltrate infant education and to work their way up the system towards secondary education, and so the outcome of whatever happens at the nursery stage over the implementation of the new policy of expansion should not be seen in isolation. Accordingly, an analysis of the factors working to create opportunities for a new synthesis between parents and professionals at the nursery stage, and the potential blocks to them, has implications for the later stages of schooling.

## THE CASE FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Three separate types of case are being made for more parental involvement in their children's education at all levels. Although they overlap, the three types of advocacy make different assumptions about what is at issue: the advocates, the pace of change demanded and ultimately its direction are in each case different. Their alliance in the short term may be necessary to create the momentum for change; but the alliance may not last and it is therefore useful to identify the three separately.

### (i) *Citizenship.*

The belief here is that in a participatory democracy all members of the community have the right to be involved in the running of their social services. At a general level there is a search for effective ways of making the professions more accountable to the community. A more specific assumption is that parents, *qua* parents, have rights to some control or at least influence on their children's environment. The assumptions behind this movement for greater effective citizen participation in the community's institutions are partly at least a reaction to the growth of public bureaucracies and a challenge to previously accepted sources of authority. Its practical expression is probably most advanced in areas where middle-class, relatively advantaged groups have organised to protect their interests; and groups most in need of a rejuvenation of belief in their rights as citizens have the most underdeveloped consciousness of those rights.

A movement towards increased participation and involvement as citizens creates an open-ended future. In a plural society different groups have different, conflicting views of their own self-interest and these would be acted out, not only through a representational electoral system, but in the operation of the institutions of society such as schools. An inevitable consequence of it would be that the teacher became a much more overtly political animal, consciously working at one of the focal points of decision-making in the society.

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(ii) *Instrumentality.*

The philosophical and empirical base for the advocacy of a larger measure of parental involvement in their children's education in this second case is quite different from the first. Rather than a justification in terms of the rights of citizenship, the belief is that parents must themselves be changed to meet their children's needs more adequately. The concern is less with control over institutions, more with the manipulation of factors seen as contributory to the child's performance at school.

Over the past fifteen years a large volume of empirical research in both Britain and the U.S.A. has been devoted to attempts to isolate the main predictors of education performance. The favoured method has been to gather information on children's home and school circumstances and their parents' aspirations for them, and then to assess the relative impact of these factors on a dependent variable, school performance, using the technique of multivariate analysis. We are currently witnessing a period of academic trench warfare over the interpretation of these findings: over, for instance, whether parental attitudes to education are dependent on or independent of parental circumstance; and over whether any of a series of school factors which might be manipulated are likely to affect the distributon of performance on the dependent variable. What seems at issue, however, is the *relative* influence of the parental contribution rather than the fact of its importance.

Certainly one of the direct consequences of this research, and of the recommendations of its authors, has been to generate a climate of opinion in favour of fostering positive parental attitudes to education and of encouraging parental interest in what happens to their children at school. In the short run the policy possibilities to be developed from this instrumental approach to parental involvement are rich and various. It is possibly the most appealing of the three justifications to both parents and teachers at the present time, largely because of its immediate pragmatic character. It is certainly the least politically contentious. Questions concerning the long-run consequences of heavy parental investments in their children's schooling for instrumental purposes need to be raised, however. If the reason for parental involvement is to improve their child's school performance, and if those improvements are presumed by parents to lead to a "better" job, then in a society where there are only a few desirable jobs and many less desirable ones, the majority will be disappointed.

(iii) *Utility.*

The third type of justification for more parental involvement is not based on long-term benefits to the individual or the social group. Rather, more overlap between the teacher's and the parent's job is desired for its own sake. It is not seen to be instrumental for something else. I use the word "utility" here in the sense close to that developed by the American writer on social policy Alfred Kahn: the purpose of the policy is to make life easier or better for the individuals receiving its administration. Thus more co-operation between teacher and parent, more support for each other and respect for the competence of and for the difficulties faced by each other, is part of what would be healthier social relationships between people.

The need for such utility can be easily seen. It can be justified with reference to other policy objectives, although these further goals are not necessary. For instance, parenthood — motherhood in particular — can be a stressful and demanding experience in advanced industrial societies. Most work in such societies is separated from the home, so that young mothers and the old may be virtually the only adults in residential districts during the day. Many mothers are isolated and lonely and from time to time frustrated with the exacting task of bringing up their children for the most part single-handed. A report in the British weekly *New Society* of a small survey of families with children under five in two areas of Liverpool and London stated that, during the week, many young mothers saw practically no one apart from their husbands— and if they did not visit "home" on Saturday and Sunday their week-end contacts were likely to be equally restricted. The same study also found that the mothers showed a great concern for the well-being of their children; they seemed to have high standards over what motherhood entailed and were anxious to be successful. Yet high motivation, although a necessary condition which the evidence suggests is usually met, is by itself insufficient to meet the standards that mothers themselves have. Knowledge and assistance are needed; the source of which might easily be the education service.

## SOURCES OF RESISTANCE: TEACHERS

There is very little reliable information on the attitudes of teachers to parents and to parental involvement, but that which we have shows some interesting lines of reasoning. Many teachers simply do not seem to have thought about the question of parental involvement. Others who have may lack the experience or information to do anything about it. Others still are opposed to it in principle; the most frequently heard reason for resistance from teachers is a fear that particular groups of parents, not necessarily those whose needs they consider to be the most important, may contrive to exploit any situation by imposing their own sectional values and interests on the curriculum and organisation of the school. For these teachers parents *qua* parents are potentially threatening: relationships with them need careful handling and parental contacts must not involve any suggestion of reductions in the status of the teacher.

Partly these are questions of personality and of attitudes. Elizabeth Goodacre, a British educational research worker, has claimed that "because of the somewhat isolated nature of the teaching profession, teachers have an over-simplified, stereotyped and out-of-date image of parents". Some teachers are possessive about the children they teach, exemplified in the attitude "I don't want parents telling me what to do with my children". She suggests that teachers who have a tendency towards an authoritarian personality are particularly likely to accept stereotypes about parents and to be resistant to innovation in parent-school relations. She also implies that teaching may be particularly attractive to people with this kind of personality. Although clearly there is a need for more evidence before such speculation can be regarded as validated, it would suggest that a fundamental barrier to parental involvement is attitudinal stereotypes on the part of teachers. If true, then many teachers will have to be pushed into some parental contact before there is any chance of a modification of their attitudes. To support this case Goodacre also found that, although authoritarian infant teachers had unfavourable attitudes to parents, this tended not to be carried over into their attitudes to the children. She attributes this to questions of knowledge and contact. Teachers at present have more to do with pupils than with parents; more contact with parents might break down stereotypes and enable more positive attitudes to develop.

A different line of reasoning sees teacher resistance to parental involvement less in terms of the attitudes of individuals and more in terms of questions of status and of the self-perception of the whole profession. Some teachers see themselves as having low status relative to other similarly organised and responsible groups. They have fought to improve their professional status for many years and they seem very sensitive about any changes which they believe threaten it. At the same time there are a series of factors which currently operate cumulatively to lower the professional prestige of school teachers. Teachers cannot, for instance, select their clients; they have no control over recruitment to the profession or over training and certification; they cannot fix fees. They are also a very large professional group. In the first place, therefore, as the system expands, as a result for instance of more nursery education, of a raising of the school-leaving age, or when replacements are needed as a result of wastage, large numbers of recruits are required. This means that restrictions on entry which might help to raise the profession's status are hard to achieve, and from their point of view there is a constant danger of declining standards. Secondly discussions of salary are in the teacher's case always complicated by the effect on the Exchequer of a salary increase for half a million people. The teacher's clients are unlike those of other professions in that their attendance is both compulsory and free. Prolonged and extensive contact with their pupil clients means that it is impossible for teachers to maintain professional mystique. Such mystique is anyway limited by the relatively weak knowedge-base of the teacher, by the lack of esoteric jargon, and by the fact that credit for success tends to be given to the pupil rather than to the teacher who has helped him to achieve it.

These fundamental status problems are compounded by the effects of rapid social and educational change on the teacher's role. We are currently, for instance, witnessing changes in the relationship between the generations. Adult members of the community can no longer assume respect from young children based on a difference in age. For many teachers this can represent an undermining of their authority. Associated with these changes between children and adults are significant changes in pedagogic techniques, which result in a re-formulation of the teacher's role as educator. Geoffrey Cooksey has described the change in the following terms: "Fundamental to it is a shift in the pupil-teacher relationship, for inquiry, experiment, activity and discovery fit ill with the imposition of formal or didactic authority. The move is inevitably towards a freer relationship in which mutual understanding and support, the sharing of problems and the acceptance of each other's fallibility are prerequisites to progress". As well as this change in approach or methods, there is a pressure to change the content of what is taught. New educational ideologies place greater emphasis on teaching skills and less on simply inculcating knowledge, and consider social relevance to be of importance in determining curriculum content.

All these changes involve adjustments from teachers and clearly many of them find adaptation difficult. As Martin Shipman has put it, "the increased rate of change also undermines the professional authority of the teacher because his skills and knowledge may appear to be irrelevant in the modern world". The teacher himself may not think so but he will suspect that others do. In spite of the growing demands on the teaching profession, surveys investigating occupational prestige find that it is ranked low in the hierarchy of professions, and that the public do not regard teaching as a job requiring extensive training and highly specialised skills. In view of all this it seems hardly surprising that many teachers resist innovations generally, and that exponents of parental involvement need to devote much of their energy to converting them to its cause.

## THE PRE-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY

If teachers themselves are seen to be the major source of resistance to parental involvement, the new British policy of expanding the provision of nursery class places constitutes both a disappointment and an opportunity. It is an opportunity in that expansion of the range of parental-teacher contacts stands most chance of success at this level of the education system. It is also a defeat, however, because a decision for nursery classes is seen by many as a decision against the play groups, which claim to be fundamentally committed to full parental participation.

The play-group movement regards the decision to expand facilities in the way proposed by the Government as a decision against it. The movement sees itself as representing a great fund of parental energy, interest and conviction which is ready to be channelled into the welfare of young children. As a spokesman for the movement, Lady Plowden has argued its case against the current policy. Her advocacy of playgroups as opposed to nursery classes was primarily in terms of the superiority of play groups as agents for parental involvement; and the case for them was made in terms of utility, citizenship and instrumentality. The utility arrow was Lady Plowden's first shot across the bows of the expansion policy; she pointed out, for instance, that the play-group movement "has enabled thousands of young mothers to enjoy and understand the development of their children. This is something which cannot be gained from outside the school door". In addition to its utility, the movement had citizenship capabilities; again, Lady Plowden pointed out that many mothers who were lonely and isolated but who became involved in playgroups subsequently became more confident members of the local community, and have taken a variety of adult education courses, including teacher-training courses. Thirdly, in her attack on the current policy, Lady Plowden stressed the instrumentality of having more confident and knowledgeable mothers as a consequence of their involvement in their children's education.

At the same time the expansion of pre-school facilities in the nursery classes, with a Government commitment to ensure parental involvement, presents an opportunity to those reformers who advocate such involvement to create examples for the rest of the school system. Many of the factors which in the rest of education service are seen as barriers to parental involvement operate with less force at this level. For instance, sources of professional insecurity are less strong at this stage, as are barriers associated with the organisation of the school day. Nursery school teachers at the moment have less reason than most to be threatened by educational change. To begin with, nursery education is expanding, an expansion welcomed by the teachers themselves. Rapid advances in knowledge present them with problems, but the problems come from within the profession itself rather than from the children. Any contemporary growth of the limitations on young people's readiness to accept unquestioningly the authority of adults is barely evident at the age of five. Teachers in the nursery class can hardly be said to have become fallible in the eyes of their clients. Further, virtually all nursery teachers are women who—in education at all events—still tend to be less concerned about their professional status than their male colleagues. In short, nursery teachers are less likely to be defensive than other teachers about their professionalism and more responsive towards parents who seek to develop working relationships with them.

A further factor favourable to the growth of positive parent-teacher links at the nursery level in Britain is the tradition in the nurseries of teachers working in the classroom with staff who are not professionally qualified themselves. Two-year-trained nursery assistants have worked effectively in such situations for many years, and in fact form at present nearly two-thirds of all the staff in nursery schools and classes. They provide the nursery teacher with a model of what contribution a non-professional, although trained, person can make, and demonstrate that professional teachers are not the only people capable of working usefully in this field. For the future it is planned that each nursery class should be staffed by one nursery teacher and one nursery assistant, so that assistants will form about half the total staff. In addition to their role as models of non-professional involvement in nursery classes, nursery assistants could well themselves provide a bridge between teacher and parents. The great majority of nursery teachers in the near future will be young and inexperienced, as the small core of experienced teachers who are at present working in nursery education will not go round. A growing proportion of nursery assistants, by contrast, are likely to be married women returning to work in a job with a relatively short training period and with school hours, once their own children are at school. In this situation it might well be that the assistant, who is herself a mother, will have more rapport with mothers than the younger and relatively less experienced teacher.

Lastly, perhaps the most significant factor working to harmonise relationships between nursery teachers and involved mothers is that the job nursery teachers see themselves as doing is closer to that of a "good" parent than are the job perceptions of teachers of older children. Discussions of objectives are rarely realistically based, but in this case there is clear evidence on what nursery teachers themselves perceive to be their main objectives—according to them, it's a job very close to good "mothering". One study found a strong emphasis given by a sample of nursery teachers to the objective of developing the child's psychological awareness of himself and others and similarly weak emphasis given to the development of intellectual or cognitive skills. The nursery teachers, according to the study, see their major priority to be "social education through which personality and character begin to develop". But this particular aspect of education will, even when children attend nursery classses for three hours each day, be a major responsibility of mothers: and one in which love, expressed in sensitivity, patience and tolerance, and some insight into the way children respond are required, rather than specific skills or knowledge associated with work to enhance children's cognitive development. That mothers must in any case be doing it, and that nursery teachers themselves want to do it, creates a larger area of overlap than can be found at later stages when parent and teacher roles diverge. It is interesting to speculate that, viewed in this way, some participation of mothers in their children's nursery classroom might actually add to nursery teachers' sense of professionalism. It would release them from mothering and allow them more opportunities to spend time on those other educational objectives such as the development of language, creativity and intellectual stimulation, which rely more specifically on applied teaching skills.

Even with those factors outlined above in its favour, for more effective parental participation to become operative at this stage and certainly later, it will need to be paralleled by new developments in teacher education. Even if all sources of teacher resistance to closer contacts with their children's parents could be overcome, there would still be the fact that many teachers would not know how to go about it. Motivation by itself would be insufficient. Teachers have been trained to teach children in the relative isolation of classrooms. Without preparation for the wider range of roles they would need to perform relating to parents, they are unlikely to be immediately successful at it; and this applies whether parents are being involved "for the sake of the children" or for their own sake.

But training by itself is also likely to be insufficient. A characteristic of much innovation in educational situations is that it atrophies once the initial innovative source has withdrawn or becomes diluted. Eric Hoyle has developed a biological analogy to illustrate the argument: the education system "sheds off" innovations in the way that living tissue rejects transplants from foreign bodies. For the transplant to be successful, it must come from the organism itself. Hoyle's conclusions for education are that innovation must come from teachers themselves. Here, then, is the opportunity created for exponents of parental involvement by the nursery education expansion. The signs are as favourable for it as they are likely to be anywhere. Successes here can be used as examples for higher levels in the system. The implementation of the nursery expansion over the next ten years probably offers the greatest opportunity so far to those who are working to convert teachers to the need for more parental involvement in education.

## SOURCES OF RESISTANCE: PARENTS

At the same time, and this has been less clearly admitted and openly discussed, there are parents who would resist attempts to involve them in their children's schooling more than they currently are. It is difficult to make generalisations about teachers with respect to their response to parental involvement. They are not all the same and there are exceptions to every rule. This is even more true of a group as heterogeneous as parents and it is hard to identify general rules which apply to the whole group. Most of the discussion of parental involvement, for instance, concerns the instrumental reasons for it and ways to achieve it with parents variously called disadvantaged, deprived, underprivileged or lower working-class. At the same time most of the parental involvement comes from advantaged, middle-class women. Parents have no common characteristics other than that they have children and their perceptions of possible relationships with teachers vary widely.

Let us assume for the moment that most parents are interested in their children and care for them—even if their expressions of parental care are not those recognised by teachers as educational care: even if this assumption is correct, many parents may not seek more involvement in their children's schools simply because of the low expectations they have of what schools ought to be providing in this respect. Various studies have measured the extent of parental visiting to schools, for example, and found it limited and declining as the children grow older. The Plowden Council explained their findings on low parental expectations in terms of people's tendency to accept what they already have and not demand what they have not experienced. The policy that follows from this analysis is relatively straightforward, and is in fact the same policy that follows from analysis of teacher resistance in terms of attitudinal stereotypes. There should be more contact between teachers and parents: parents would have their aspirations raised; teachers would discover that parents were as human as they are.

Certainly the implementation of this policy for some parents would need to be sensitive. For some groups the problem is not so much low expectations as lack of confidence and an inability to make their views manifest. For these, encouragement and substantial support is necessary if contact with their children's teachers is to be rewarding for them. Further, a neutral intermediary might usefully link teachers with parents who lack confidence. This could be part of the job of the education visitor: bringing parents and teachers together, showing schools how to be receptive to the needs of parents and encouraging parents to be active rather than passsive in their relationship with the schools. Successful performance of the educational visitor role, defined in the way above, involves something other than adding another arm to the school system and extending its rule into the children's homes. It involves, rather, the occupation of a neutral position in the no-man's-land between parental diffidence towards and teacher defence of the sanctity of the school.

Where there is deeply internalised parental resistance to involvement with teachers—assuming still that the basic will is there and all that's needed is the way—it is clear that an individual or agency working in isolation is likely to be impotent. The British writers Hubbard and Galt have argued recently, for instance, that there is a need to spark parents into a full realisation of their potential as citizens of the school-providing and school-using community and that a multi-agency approach is necessary for this effect: "What is genuinely striking is the extent to which working-class parents in particular have been persuaded to abdicate broader educational responsibilities in favour of the institution. It is significant, for example, that the majority of mothers in a sample in an industrial area of North East Derbyshire professed a complete lack of belief that they themselves possessed any skill or knowledge that might enhance their children's cognitive and intellectual development."

At the same time it must be recognised that there is entrenched apathy from some parents, even if this is a small minority, about their children's schooling and positive suspicion of the education system. This is not a reason for excluding such parents from the net of involvement; indeed, to use apathy and hostility as a reason for excluding parents from schools would be to use one of the most substantial reasons for wishing to increase parental involvement as grounds for preventing it. It is, perhaps, precisely in those cases where parents themselves appear to be one of the main obstacles to parental involvement that it is important to try to achieve it, for it is here that families deviate most from what, in this society, parenthood is seen to involve.

Parent education has been put forward as an important weapon in the strategy to break what some have called the cycle of deprivation — otherwise known as transmitted poverty. Parent education may be either education of children for parenthood or education of parents for their responsibilities. In Britain various ways of implementing education for parenthood have been proposed for study. These range from secondary-school courses for fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds to work with young couples expecting a child. But probably the most frequently advocated form of parental education is parental involvement in nursery and primary schools. This paper is not a contribution to the debate about poverty, transmitted or otherwise, and how it can be eliminated. But if there are families locked into a cycle of transmitted deprivation, and in the same way if there are families who have strongly hostile views concerning education, schools and teachers, it is naive to believe that more contact with teachers, more information and more communication will be sufficient to limit and correct their deviance. If, in this case, parental involvement is deemed a good thing, then, with this group, stronger medicine will be necessary to achieve it.

There are other factors at work in the society operating as potential sources of parental resistance to more involvement with schools in the future, and operating here at the macro level. There is the increasing trend for mothers to return to work at the earliest opportunity; but a more general expression of this is that women's time is becoming a scarce commodity. The recent General Household Survey showed that, although the proportion of women working declined with the number of dependent children, thirty per cent of those with five or more children worked. Further, although the proportion again declined by the age of the mother (reflecting presumably the age of her dependent children), seventeen per cent of mothers aged between eighteen and twenty-four with two or more children and thirty-two per cent of the age-group 25-34 with two or more children worked.

The consequences of increasing rates of economically active mothers for policies to involve them in their children's education are clear. To begin with, they are unlikely, in the long run, to "work" in the classroom as unpaid assistants to the teacher (a favourite approach of the advocates of parental involvement). They will themselves be working: for money. Giving up time to be involved with one's children's education will be to expend a precious commodity. It will be costly; for it to be worth while the anticipated benefits will need to be correspondingly high.

Such analysis leads away from attempts to identify, *in vacuo*, barriers to parental involvement on the part of teachers and parents respectively, and leads instead towards further examination of what the various involved parties might want from it. Henry Acland's review (in an unpublished paper) of parent-and-teacher-attitude surveys, both in this country and in the United States, points directly towards a situation of conflict, which can only become more intense as the two parties engage. Parents, argues Acland, emphasise the instrumental virtues of an educational experience; their children learn from it to read, to write, to do their sums and they are thereby helped to get a good job. Teachers, on the other hand, want to sell their wares in terms of an expressive content; education is intrinsically worth while and enjoyable and the more of it you have the better person you are. Without trying to predict the outcome of encounters such as those which might reasonably be seen to flow from such an analysis, two things seem important. In the first place, it is reasonable to assume that teachers, or some of them at least, can foresee situations of conflict if parental demands on schools for their children were to be given free expression. Further, parents, or the majority of them anyway, can only be disappointed in their instrumental aspirations. It might be reasonable to expect schools to teach children certain intellectual and social skills; it is unrealistic to believe that all children will thereby improve their position in the job market.

Secondly, it becomes imperative to generate a framework within which the diverse strands to the discussion of parental involvement might be brought together if the various parties are to see the issues more clearly. We have already made the point that there are at least three different types of case for more parental participation in education: in terms of citizenship, utility and instrumentality. Two further dimensions should be added to a framework for discussion of parental participation in education: the first concerned with its contents, the second with its character, or what might be called the degree of involvement.

## PARTICIPATION OVER WHAT?

There are three topic areas over which teachers and parents might participate: *the subjects of the educational process* (the children and in some cases the parents themselves): the *resources* available and the *curriculum* of educational institutions.

The last of these three possible contents of involvement is perhaps the most contentious. It involves questions of what is taught and how and who teaches it. Clearly, in as far as the case for parental involvement is presented in terms of its instrumentality for the educational performance of the children, questions of what is the appropriate curriculum, and who teaches it, are not on the agenda for participation. Curriculum matters are entirely the preserve of the teachers. Some interpretations of "the community school" in the United States, however, involve precisely parent and community control over the hiring and firing of teachers and over the appropriate school curriculum. The case here is being made in terms of citizenship rather than instrumentality. Although it seems far removed from the current situation in Britain, it should not be discounted as a possible future topic on the agenda of participation.

A characteristic of the education service in Britain is that, in contrast to the curriculum, educational resources available to schools are both fairly standardised and centrally determined. A popular strategy for advocates of participation is to suggest that parents themselves either become or help to raise extra resources for their children's school. The range of possibilities is wide—from mothers as aides in the classroom to fathers raising money and building the school greenhouse. This sort of activity—unless it is a means to some further end like bringing parents and teachers together and raising parental confidence—could barely be called participation or involvement. Parents are themselves in this case the extra resources or fund-raiser; they do not participate in any way in decisions over the use of educational resources.

Currently, the most obvious subject for discussion in participation between parents and teachers is the children for whom they are both responsible. Limiting the subjects on the agenda to the children and their progress is both a way of limiting tensions and, some would argue, ensuring that participation is ineffective.

It is not the object of this paper to advocate parental involvement or to prescribe its most viable forms or contents. I do assert, however, that if serious attempts are being made over the next ten years to promote it, we need not only to identify barriers, we need also to ask of those attempts what the various parties to it regard as legitimate subjects on its agenda and whether and how they can shift their position to reconcile the interests of other parties.

## THE DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT

Clearly the most acceptable level of involvement in the short term is one which allows *information* to be passed from teacher to parent and vice versa. The crucial question here is whether any of the involved parties, for whatever reason and over whatever topic, want more than involvement over transmission of information. The teacher might *consult* with parents over, for instance, making decisions about what secondary school a child will attend. Involvement at this level means more than passing on information; it might be initiated by the parent and the parent's views might affect a teacher's opinion or recommendation. Further, some parents might wish to *negotiate* with their child's teacher, actually holding a position contrary to that of the teachers and forcing a compromise solution. What seems clear is that, if the future level of involvement required by any group involves parental *veto* or *control* over any of the operations of a school, new strategies will be required for managing the situation.

## CONCLUSION

In making the case for more parental involvement, it is currently popular to synthesise the three different types of justification for it, and to argue that, if it can be achieved, everybody gains—teachers, parents, children and "the community". Dr. Eric Midwinter's conclusions from his E.P.A. Action-Research activities in Liverpool, for instance, are that "the urban community school" is now both urgently necessary and practically viable. Midwinter's short-term objective for the community school is primarily instrumental: "this would engineer so harmonious a balance between school and home that the child's education would be more stable". His long-term objective, on the other hand, seems to be more concerned with citizenship in a modern urban society: "In the long term, one foresees the school as an agency, alongside other social and communal organisms, working towards community regenerations". Additionally, and as a means to the attainment of his short- and long-term goals, Midwinter sees community schools having certain utility functions; he assumes, for instance, that "the school would deploy its plant for the benefit of its catchment area".

A three-stage policy operation to promote more parental involvement follows from this kind of analysis. The first step should be to promote more overall contact between teachers and parents; contact would, hopefully, break down the stereotypes each has of the other. In order to get this under way, the initiative should come from the teachers and they should be helped in this by parental-involvement training courses. For hard-line parental resistance, specially trained home-school liaison counsellors are needed with a relatively loose and independent attachment to the school but having sympathy with and knowledge of its overall educational aims.

Advocates of social reform have a special role to play in helping create a climate of opinion for change. That role is persuasive rather than analytic. But, in the case of the advocacy of changes towards more parental involvement, it is unlikely that that line of argument is any longer the most constructive. After perhaps ten years of advocacy, the main barriers to involvement seem to come from the two main involved parties: parents and teachers. Accordingly, I suggest that another method could be developed which is based on more knowledge of what is at issue. For both teachers and parents there are costs to creating an area of overlap between their roles — behavioural change is needed. Time must be invested, differences must be reconciled. We need to spell out clearly what the two parties will get from the engagement.

The expansion of pre-school education can provide a context in which more experiments in parental involvement can take place and consequently the advantages spelled out for the rest of the system to emulate or to avoid. But a major source of confusion and a block to progress towards more parental involvement has been insufficient consideration of the barriers to it, and of the form it should take. What is needed still is not only good answers but also good questions. In this paper I have tried to make a first attempt at identifying some of these, in the hope that others will be able to go on from here to more detailed research and experiment on this subject.

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# Evaluating Pre-School Programmes: Issues and Problems

By Dr. PATRICIA P. MINUCHIN*

I'D LIKE to take you on a journey with me—over to America and back and forth in time over the past ten years. I do that because we have had some extraordinary experiences during that time in relation to pre-school education, and I am hopeful that those experiences may be interesting and potentially useful for you.

I am a little concerned about what I am doing, of course. There are some important differences between our countries: our population is much more varied, I think, and certainly more numerous, and that affects the climate of our lives, the experience of our children, and the whole teaching structure and enterprise. Not all of our problems or efforts may seem relevant to you. It's also possible that some of you are not primarily interested in evaluation issues, especially if you work daily in the classroom and directly with the children. But I take courage from the idea that we all must share certain things, like a general interest in the welfare and growth of young children, and that we all feel accountable and concerned about what is offered to them educationally. That is, after all, the broadest and most basic reason for evaluating our efforts. So I will be telling you something about our experiences in evaluation, and I beg your forgiveness in advance for the things I may say that have no particular relevance for you. I will also ask you to work along with me, translating wherever possible into terms that have direct importance for your own professional lives and issues.

I will need, first of all, to describe something of our educational expansion over the past decade or so. During those years we have had a tremendous burgeoning of pre-school programmes, involving large numbers of children from geographic areas and economic levels that had seen little of early education until then. That expansion gave us an opportunity to do many things. We developed new programmes and thought about their relevance for different populations of children; we explored new pathways for teacher training and supervision; we gained experience in working with neighbourhood personnel in the classroom and in the development of policy. At the same time, the expansion carried with it the necessity to monitor and evaluate what we were doing, and in the course of doing that, we learned a great deal. My major purpose, as I've already indicated, is to share the problems and implications of that experience with you, after I have given you some general background.

The great national expansion of pre-school education took place in the mid-1960s. It was funded and organised by the Federal Government under the name of Head Start, which many of you may be familiar with. At that time, of course, we already had a long history of nursery school education. In America, as in many other nations, we had begun to bring young children into pre-school settings much earlier in the century and to think and plan very carefully for the kinds of experiences, materials and relationships they required. The goals of such education were usually broad and the best of the programmes, which were very good indeed, made strong efforts to work with the developing knowledge about how children grow and learn, and with the insights from dynamic theory about the complexity of personality formation and the importance of the early years in establishing patterns for human interchange, the expression of feeling, and attitudes toward the self. This movement was fairly extensive, but it involved mostly the children of white, middle-class parents from sophisticated urban centres and suburbs. That pattern was to change. The Head Start programme involved well over a million children from urban ghettos and rural pockets of poverty, and the programmes they were offered ranged over a wide spectrum of goals and practices.

The roots of this pre-school expansion lay in social unrest. As part of the strong and turbulent protests across the country about life conditions for black Americans, attention had been drawn to the failure of the schools with poor, minority, disadvantaged children, and the nation was challenged to action. The major official response (Head Start) took its form from psychological theory and recommendations about the importance of experience in the early years for later learning. The psychological sources were no longer predominantly psychodynamic. They resided in varieties of cognitive theory (part of the dominant *zeitgeist* of the era), an extensively growing body of research about infant capacities and learning, and a general concentration of professional interest on issues like the malleability of early intelligence, and the effects of enriched environments on early cognitive growth. Within this framework, the idea developed that disadvantaged children needed more stimulation and enriched experience in the early years than their families were providing, if they were to do well and take advantage of their later, more formal schooling. They needed a "head start"—hence the name of the programme.

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In these first formulations, there were ideas about "deficit" in the concepts, language and general development of the children at the point of entering first grade, and of a "compensatory" component to the Head Start programme. These later became sensitive and questionable formulations, as communities reacted to the implications of parental failure in this terminology, and as educators and psychologists struggled with the growing realisation that the children brought a language and culture of their own into school, and that "deficit" was at least partially defined through comparison with prevailing middle-class culture and language. All of that has led us toward a greater thoughtfulness about social and psychological complexities. Whatever the perception of "deficit", however, it seemed clear that these children were entitled to the benefits of pre-school experience, and thousands of pre-school centres were established throughout the country with the idea of improving early life experiences and the chances of later school and occupational success for the socially and economically disadvantaged.

Guidelines for these programmes made provision for medical care and for nutritional and safety standards. They established criteria for staff qualifications and classroom equipment; made provision for parent involvement, and set mandatory limits to group size, involving a high ratio of adults to groups of fifteen or twenty children. There was to be an emphasis on the child's confidence and relationships with the others; the growth of language competence; the maintenance and improvement of physical health and the involvement of the family in the child's welfare and education. Within that broad framework, programmes could take their own form and they varied, of course, in their nature and quality.

The first evaluations were disappointing — inevitably, I think. Too much was expected too soon, and the methods of evaluation were extremely conventional, involving the IQ, Readiness and Achievements tests that were available. The very importance of the programme as a piece of social action bred naive hopes of quick change in concrete measurable forms, and caused impatient disappointment with the results. Head-Start children tended to show either no unique gains or immediate gains that disappeared, in comparison with non-Head-Start children, as they moved into school and through the early grades. The controversy over Head Start and its effects led to at least one interesting development: the establishment of the "Follow-Through" programme. In the various discussions about why positive effects might not be sustained, attention was now drawn to the early school grades and to the probability that they were not adequate to support and enhance growth, especially in areas where disadvantaged children went to school. "Project Follow-Through" was established as a continuation programme, also federally funded, on a wide scale, and aimed at the primary elementary years.

Here a new and interesting element entered with major implications for the evaluation process. The entire structure of the Follow-Through programme was centred around alternative conceptions of education. These were specified as "models", and the direction of each model was given over to a sponsoring institution, which was responsible for developing programme and for training and supervising educators from anywhere in the nation interested in implementing the particular model in their own school setting. This "alternative model" structure subsequently moved down into the pre-school Head Start level (Head Start Planned Variation, or HSPV).

To understand this rather startling and certainly interesting development, one must understand the atmosphere of the time and the fact that a variety of theories and programmes were in active development around the country. The influence of Piaget's theories was growing; behaviouristic, operant psychology, based on the work of B. F. Skinner and widely accepted in America, had generated a variety of educational techniques and programmes; the British infant education movement and the integrated day concept had moved to America as a rapidly spreading movement toward "open education"; and the complex viewpoint about the development of a whole, thinking and feeling child, rooted in Dewey's work, the mental health movement and dynamic and developmental theories, had undergone further evolution. Add to this the growing drive for community impact on education and the bilingual needs of some Spanish-speaking and Native American children (Indians, Eskimos, etc.), and one has a rather heady mix of potential ingredients and recipes for education. I cannot honestly say that all these forces represented equal wisdom and experience concerning young children, nor were they all equally suitable for translation into a total educational programme and environment. I will go further and say that some of the models seemed to represent lost ground, in that they took little account of broad developmental goals, or the things we already knew about young children and early education. Nonetheless, they were all active, and felt to be somehow relevant to our educational needs and problems.

The Follow-Through and Head Start structure crystallised these de facto alternatives into official "models". The number has varied with time, but has generally included about a dozen alternatives, each sponsored by a university or educational centre. Among the models, some do not have a clearly defined educational position at all. They stress bilingual education or the active role of parents, for instance, and the educational activities themselves may take any form. Most models, however, have an educational position, and they fall into clusters representing versions of the major trends I have referred to. The particular names would probably not be meaningful across cultures, but it probably conveys the meaning to say that there are models based on behaviouristic operant theories, on Piagetian ideas extrapolated to early education, on British infant school methods, and on comprehensive theories of child development and learning.

At the extremes, these alternatives are profoundly different. They have different goals for the children, different conceptions of how and why they learn, and different views of the teacher's role; it follows that they implement their programmes through very different experiences and materials. At one extreme, for instance, is the behavioural analysis programme, based on the operant theories of Skinner and the precise forms of behaviouristic educational training that have been derived from them. This programme stresses the child's learning of specific skills, even at pre-school levels, selecting those that will be directly required for the child's learning tasks in traditional first grades. The emphasis is on language, early math and decoding skills for reading. Children are trained to stay on-task and rewarded for correct responses in tangible ways — through tokens, for instance, that can be traded in later for certain privileges or desirable play materials. The objectives are limited but clearly specified, the drill is direct, and the definition of accomplishment is well reflected in specific tests of basic skills.

At the other extreme, the comprehensive programme sponsored by Bank Street College in New York, which is currently referred to as the "developmental-interaction" approach, has completely different conceptions of purpose and procedure. This approach stresses the development of the child's total personality, and the inter-relationship of all aspects of growth: mastery and learning, the child's sense of self, and the capacity to relate with trust and depth to other people. It emphasises the child's active involvement in exploration and learning and sees the development of language as part of the communication process, which is to be encouraged in all its meaningful forms. This viewpoint highlights play, in the pre-school years, as a natural medium for organising experience, expressing feelings and exploring roles. Vigorous interaction with materials and other people is considered crucial, and the teacher has an important role in relation to the child's learning, sense of security and emotional growth. Obviously, the environment, activities and materials in such a programme are very different from the other, and it is not so easy to measure the effects.

I will not describe the programmes that lie between and overlap with these extremes, and certainly even the two descriptions I have given are sketchy. I want only to indicate the great range of programmes, as background for discussing the problems of evaluation, trusting that you have counterparts in this country and that the issues are generic.

An extensive evaluation plan was built into this structure. Implicit in the plan were certain orienting ideas, or perhaps one could call them values. *First*, the evaluation had a comparative goal. It was meant to indicate what "works best". In its best possible sense, this was meant to help us know what forms of education are good and effective for young children — predominantly disadvantaged children, in this situation, but by extrapolation, perhaps, for all children. In its poorer, though presumably practical sense, it was a competitive situation (very American), with implications for what are sometimes referred to as "go–no go" decisions about the further financial support of particular programmes. *Secondly*, the evaluation had a cognitive emphasis. This emphasis was not characteristic of the programme people within all models by any means, but there was a prevailing idea, in the evaluation, that better achievement in school was the ultimate goal of this entire intervention, and that short-range cognitive change would be the clue to important effects. *Third*, the evaluation proceeded on the firm belief that our scientific and methodological knowledge would solve the evaluation problems and guarantee clear results. We are justly famous for our research skills, and the professionals in charge of evaluation were well qualified for the task, bringing to it their considerable expertise in research design, test-construction and the formal techniques of objective evaluation. It was hoped and expected that this would make for solid research and lead to definitive answers.

All these ideas are now more open to question than they were. For some people in the educational field, the orientation had seemed questionable to begin with. The task seemed broader, deeper and messier than this design and emphasis implied, and they raised the question of whether apples and oranges could be compared in any simple way that would be meaningful. After some years of data collection, analysis and experience, however, the questions are now raised not only by those who have always been troubled or sceptical, but by people who have worked actively with the data-collection process and examined the material in detail. Let me summarise some of the things we now know:

Perhaps I should say, first of all, that expanded pre-school education will undoubtedly go on, continuing to involve children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, and that this reality is based on broad and not very scientific factors. Such social phenomena do not really depend on the results of formal evaluation. Once established, the general worth of the idea seems self-evident. The children are thought to benefit in some way, the medical aspects have certainly been important, and it seems clear that parents have developed new attitudes and a greater sense of involvement in their children's growth Many have become staunch supporters, and parent groups have often rallied to the programmes in areas where they are threatened. So, while the issues of funding and support are important and there may be some shrinkage, such programmes will continue. But we do not know what "works best" among the various programmes, and as I've indicated, the high hopes that we would gain differentiated knowledge through the evaluation have not been very well realised. Let me discuss some of the reasons why.

For one thing, we have learned that tests are a poor way to understand young children or evaluate their growth. That is especially true for intellectual areas that go beyond the measurement of accumulated knowledge to attitudes of involvement and curiosity or differences in thinking style, and it is *very* evident in relation to such matters as self-concept, emotional strength, creativity or interpersonal attitudes. These are important matters to many educators, however, and for a number of the models referred to earlier they represented primary goals. Because of their importance, there was a concentrated effort, in the national evaluation, to locate and develop tests that would tap non-cognitive development, and these were widely administered. However, in a subsequent study of the quality of these data, and of tests generally available for young children in these areas, the general conclusion was that they were inadequate. In research jargon, we would say they are not sufficiently valid or reliable. In more direct terms, we face the fact that we do not know for sure what we are measuring, and that Mary probably will not do the same things in relation to our tests on Wednesday as she did on Tuesday. Some theories have been advanced about why this is so, including the idea that personality theory is not sufficiently clear, as yet, to guide the test construction successfully. That is probably true, and we will probably continue to improve our theories and develop better tests. I think we must and should. But I think, myself, that Mary will continue to elude us, even when our theories improve, simply because she is four years old, and changeable, and exploring life, and not very tuned in to testing procedures. If we want to know more about her, in all her complexity, we will probably need to come closer to her own natural settings and to her own style of expressing herself.

There is a corollary to this problem. Since the formal IQ and Achievement tests are the most stable tests we have, and this situation is not likely to change very rapidly, there is a temptation to keep using them as the criteria of progress. Even more serious there is some subtle tendency to allow them to co-opt the educational programmes. If these are the tangible criteria, then the programmes must be directed toward them and the goals and features that cannot be so easily measured come under attack. But that, of course, is faulty reasoning. The goals of education are a matter of values and theories, and the development of programmes should be directly related to the goals. The proper role of measurement is as servant, not master — a tool for understanding what we are doing and not a referent for what we do.

A second problem, in the evaluation procedure, was that it produced information that was fragmented and out of context, particularly in the early stages when the evaluation procedures were most rigorous and the testing most conventional. The information was simply not in useful form for teachers, who were, after all, responsible for the daily programme and the growth of the children. They could be criticised, but they could not be helped much.

The third problem I have already referred to: we have not discovered what works best. The comparative research findings have often been negligible —a function, probably, of the way we have asked the questions and collected the data, since it is clear that the programmes are very different and must have different effects. Where differences have emerged, they do go in expected directions. There is a suggestion in recently published results, for instance, that certain attitudes are more characteristic of children in relatively open, developmentally oriented settings—attitudes like curiosity, inventiveness and so on—and that would be consistent with programme goals. It is also true that children who are trained by direct instruction in specific skills, through the behaviourally oriented programmes such as the one I described earlier, generally do better on tests of intelligence and achievement, which are designed to measure the areas of training and are in a format familiar to the children in these programmes. This is the clearest and most recurrent finding in the accumulating research, and it brings us directly to the crucial reason why we cannot find out what "works best": the question of educational values and the interpretation of meaning.

Suppose children do better on these tests. Is that a desirable outcome? More important, should the methods that produce this result be routinely introduced into pre-schools? Educators of a different persuasion have not accepted that implication. They ask whether such skills are important for thinking and learning in the children's daily life, if they are learned in these mechanical ways. Do they guarantee later learning, and what kind of learning do they foreshadow? Do they take a toll on the child's development, seen within a larger framework of goals for early education? Such educators have chosen not to drill the children on these skills in the first place. They have reasoned that such methods encourage a piecemeal and externally organised style of thinking, and that this is a greater loss, in the formative years, when patterns of intellectual attitudes are being laid down, than can possibly be compensated for by the specific gains in rote learning. The fact that a recent study finds the children from direct instruction programmes relatively low in inventiveness and curiosity lends some support to this argument, and I am myself of this opinion. The more important point for my concern with evaluation, however, is that research findings evidently do not settle the questions about the worth of a programme. It is important to know whether a programme is accomplishing what it sets out to do, but decisions about optimal forms of early education refer back to the question of purposes and viewpoint. The criteria are partly philosophical, in that they reflect what we value in life, and partly psychological, in that they incorporate what we know and believe about the natural forms of children's learning and the mechanisms of growth. They are not really scientific, and they are not amenable to research proof.

So we have found, in these ten years, that the tests for young children are not very good, that the comparative findings about educational effects are not powerful or widespread, and that the meaning of the findings that are emerging comes through to us with the same variability of interpretation that has led people to design different educational environments in the first place. Values in education are important, and there are no universal mandates that have come from the data.

Where are we now?

We seem to be moving toward a different paradigm for evaluating early childhood education. In a recent comprehensive review of Federal Programmes for Young Children, it has been suggested that we change the emphasis and purposes of evaluation. The report suggests that we evaluate effects over a broad range of functioning, rather than in narrowly defined intellectual terms, and that we shift our efforts away from testing toward various kinds of observation in the classroom, where the natural processes of teaching, learning and growth take place. It suggests that we take a predominantly "formative" rather than a purely "summative" stance toward the whole evaluation process. "Summative evaluation", the prevailing orientation until recently (at least for research evaluation), is directed toward making definitive judgements about the effectiveness of a programme and it is product-oriented. "Formative evaluation" takes place in an ongoing situation. It is process-oriented and is directed toward the feedback of information into the educational field. In over-simplified terms, these conceptions symbolise the difference between *proving* and *improving* the worth of an educational programme, and the report is suggesting that we shift our emphasis from one posture to the other. That set of ideas comes closer, I think, to the needs and viewpoint of educators, who work directly with the children and must plan the educational programmes.

Let me turn now and put those educators at the centre of the stage (and I think here I am finally talking about many of you). What is a useful and important evaluation process from the point of view of educators? Assuming that teachers want to be accountable for what they are doing and to develop increasingly growth-supporting environments for children, what do they want to be accountable for, and what *should* they be accountable for?

Teachers need first of all to be accountable for their goals—for thinking through carefully what they hope to accomplish and for discussing whether those goals are adequate and true to the nature of young children. I think the goals must be clear and somehow meaningful, which means that teachers need to sit down at intervals and vitalise their ideas again, rather than taking them for granted in a vague way. I think the goals must also be broad in scope, taking into account the many facets of child life that come into the classroom. Young children come to school with all their energies and uncertainties and fantasies and feelings, and I fault some of the models that have been developed, in our country at least, because they do not take account of all that, nor feel responsible for the direction of growth in those areas. A *theory* can focus on one aspect of development, but an *environment* cannot.

Once we are setting goals for an educational programme they must be self-consciously broad, with some basis of knowledge in the things we already know about young children. We know, for instance, that children have psychological issues to work out about separating from familiar people and trusting new ones, about managing anger, exploring new environments, relating to other children, and so forth. We also know something about the charm and limitations of their thought patterns, the prevalence of fantasy in their lives, and the importance of action and play as the natural modes through which they extend and master experience. Our broad goals for pre-school children need somehow to take all that into account. Within the framework of broad goals for development that apply to all children, teachers will want to set the more specific goals that have meaning for their own setting. That may mean particular consideration of the goals and meaning of language and communication for bilingual or disadvantaged children, the issues of mastery for children with major physical handicaps, or of trust for the bewildered, suspicious children who come out of harsh and abusive environments. Even without especially dramatic problems, each setting will have its own goals to think through for the group and for each individual child.

It follows, as the next level of accountability, that teachers are responsible for deriving a programme that will implement their goals. That is a logical challenge—an "if-then" proposition, if you like. *If* we want to foster the child's sense of confidence as a learner, *then* we need to provide . . .", and here the details come from know-how about programmes and teaching. There is an easy tradition in pre-school education, of course, that can make programme implementation seem self-evident: a hand-me-down of equipment and routines and activities that any new teacher can take on without much thought. Those traditions come originally from people who followed an if-then reasoning process; who had reasons for setting up what they did. But it does not follow that all those things fit every situation or era. Each teacher (or group of teachers), it seems to me, is accountable for re-thinking the way things are done and why, so that a programme plan will be sure to reflect the programme purposes, and will be amenable to change on a reasoned basis of new ideas or the perception of a mismatch between goals and programme detail.

At the next level of accountability we come to actual programme—the way in which it is put into practice, and the way in which children are responding. Let me dwell a little on this level, and the kind of accountability and information that makes most educational sense.

Consider first the implementation of a programme. Once teachers have thought through their goals and the kind of programme that would serve those goals, what actually happens in the classroom? How closely does reality match intent? Suppose we mean to support children's confidence and autonomy by accepting and extending their ideas, by providing a range of activities freely chosen, by recognising their specific accomplishments in a personalised way, and so forth—are we really doing that? Here we need careful and detailed observation in the classroom, with direct feedback of organised information for discussion and evaluation.

One of the interesting by-products of the national evaluation I have discussed has been exactly in this area. In the early phases of evaluation, perhaps characteristically for traditional evaluation research, the actual pre-school environments went unexamined. The focus was on the child's performance as a function of the pre-school intervention, and the intervention itself was taken for granted. The label stood for the fact: these five settings were "behavourial analysis", these five settings were "Bank Street developmental" and so forth, and the children were duly tested and compared. But for a variety of reasons, including the protests of the sponsors, who knew how long and difficult a process it was for teachers to learn and implement a particular viewpoint, even if they were interested in it, and how uneven the different settings were in achieving a representative environment, the focus changed. Evaluators began to interview sponsors about the essentials of their programmes, to develop some criteria for assessing the environments of the different models, and to apply these to the different settings. The question of assessing environments in terms of the match between intention and reality became interesting for itself, and some instruments and techniques for observing in the classroom, in a disciplined way, have been developed during these years. Some were developed within the national evaluation structure and others were developed by workers associated with the different models or carrying on their own smaller scale evaluation research. We now have an accumulating pool of structured techniques, geared to observing in classrooms of young children, and focusing both on the programme and teaching aspects and on the ways in which children respond in the pre-school setting. These techniques are useful for relatively formal evaluation purposes, since they are constructed in a form that leads to numbers and to possibilities for comparison, but they take their data from the classroom and, at their best, they are geared to direct feedback of meaningful information for teaching and staff development purposes.

I'd like to give you an example of such a technique, to convey the flavour of what is involved. This particular technique was developed by research and educational staff associated with the early education model sponsored by Bank Street College—that is, the comprehensive developmental approach I referred to earlier. It is one of the more sensitive and interesting techniques that have been developed, perhaps exactly because the underlying conception of education has broad scope.

The instrument is called the BRACE System of Interaction Analysis (Behaviour Ratings and Analysis of Communication in Education), and the technique provides for systematically recording the behaviour and interactions of teachers and children, as these are observed in the classroom setting. Observation focuses on one person at a time and the observer categorises the individual's activity and role, and the direction, content and quality of that person's communication. The observer must work in certain time frames, making a judgement of what is happening at specified intervals and recording it on a form, using the descriptive categories provided by the system. These include cognitive categories, such as "imaginative thought" and affective or supportive categories of various kinds, such as "the expression of negative feelings", or "the clarification of another person's ideas". To take an example: a teacher who compliments a child for locating something they have been talking about would be coded as "recognising the child's specific accomplishment" (a particular category), and when the child tells everybody, in proud excitement, that he was the one who did it, he would be coded as "expressing positive feelings."

What emerges over time is a descriptive pattern of the individual's way of functioning or the typical patterns in a classroom, depending on how the information is accumulated and used. The developers of BRACE, in fact, use the instrument for various purposes: to evaluate a programme in terms of its own goals, to compare the patterns of different classrooms and to assess the language and behaviour patterns of individual children. They have also used it widely for various kinds of staff development.

With particular interest in using the instrument in a variety of ways, the developers have prepared a long version, appropriate for more formal data-collection purposes, and a short version, appropriate for use by teachers, assistants and supervisors in their own settings. Training materials and procedures are available which vary, again, with the needs of the user. For staff-development purposes aimed at sharpened perceptions in the classroom, a few hours of training are sufficient. For skilful coding in the active environment of the classroom, it takes more like a week of intensive training to become familiar with the categories and procedures, so that quick and accurate judgements can be made. This presents a problem for local use by school people, but the system has sometimes been learned by one or two people in a school area or training group, who then circulate to classrooms to collect and feed back material. The feedback is used for discussion and for setting specific goals for change, and subsequent observation offers a further check on whether such changes are occurring.

Such techniques are an important new resource for evaluation, especially when the categories have scope and sophistication about child development and the realities of a classroom, and when they are designed for multiple purposes and flexible use. They are geared to natural settings and they capture process, allowing for direct, meaningful feedback into the teaching situation, but they are systematic and allow a comparative framework for looking at particular programmes or teachers or children, if that is the relevant goal. They represent a great advance, to my mind, over both hazy impressions that cannot quite be captured and the formal testing approaches that will continue to own us, whenever issues of accountability are raised, if we have no alternatives.

There are other techniques for gathering information that are also rooted in the daily life of the pre-school centre but are not quite so formalised. They are familiar to teachers and, though they are not thought of as "techniques", they are the raw material through which teachers characteristically evaluate what is happening and how things are going. My own point of view, and it is shared by others, is that these informal techniques ought to be given more status, brought into firmer and more disciplined form, and used more systematically for evaluation.

The most helpful materials of this kind are the children's own work and art products; the teachers' records of curriculum planning, implementation and change; the teachers' notes about particular children or processes or events; the notes on discussions with parents or among teachers, and so forth. Such procedures are available and informal, but they need to be more systematically planned and organised than is typically the case: a plan, perhaps, to keep systematic notes about certain activities, to collect a sample of art work every three weeks, to formalise discussions with parents into a scheduled interview, to observe particular children and record in detail what they do and say. This kind of material is potentially very rich and it has sometimes been used in our country for systematic evaluation, and to answer the questions that teachers are concerned about.

I'd like to read you a short excerpt from an observational record about a child, just to remind you of something that most of you know very well—how informative and useful such material can be in understanding (or let us say, evaluating) how a child is functioning, and in planning for that child's further growth. I must apologise for the fact that this child is already six and thus very old in comparison to the younger pre-school children, but the material comes from some work I have been involved in recently and will serve, in any event, for illustration. The excerpt is from an "open classroom" that would resemble most pre-school settings, with many separate areas for different kinds of activities, a variety of materials easily available to the children, and considerable freedom for the children to move about in contact with each other.

> Jean is standing at a table with three other girls and they are all making birdhouses out of plastic milk-bottles. Jean says to the other children, "I made a pretty flowered lining for the birds". She claps her hands together, picks up a crayon and makes a mark on a piece of paper. Then she walks around the table to where Eleanor is working on her birdhouse and says to her, holding out the paper, "Will you make a bird picture on here for me? Trace over your bird." Eleanor pays no attention, but Sheila, one of the other girls, draws a picture for her. Then Jean turns to Amy, who is standing silently next to her holding a piece of material in her hand and says, "Okay, put it on."
>
> Jean picks up a pair of scissors, then puts it down and begins to colour the paper bird Sheila has made for her. She takes the scissors and cuts around the bird, looking around the room while she cuts. She notices Chris, who is painting nearby at the easel, and says, "That's nice, Chris." She continues to cut out the bird and watch Chris paint, then turns back to the table. She says to the other girls, "When the birds lay eggs in there, I'm going to take one . . . when the mother is away". She spreads some paste on a piece of material and puts the material on the birdhouse. She stands for a moment with her arms folded, then picks up the picture and pastes it on the inside of the bottle. She says, "I'm putting a picture on the wall."
>
> Jean turns to Amy, holding out a piece of paper, and says, "Put some glue on this." Amy follows her directions and Jean then pastes the paper around the handle of the bottle. She takes a crayon and colours the bottle in all the places that are not covered with material or paper. She picks up a piece of material and says to Amy, "Cut a piece off here". Then she walks around the table again and says to Eleanor, "Eleanor, make me a baby bird". Eleanor does not respond and Jean takes the piece of material which Amy has cut and tries it on the top of the bottle.
>
> Jean goes to a drawer and looks inside. She begins to move around the room, searching in an impatient way, for scissors. She finds a pair on the table and walks over to the assistant teacher, carrying the scissors and a piece of material, and asks her to cut it. The teacher suggests she cut the material herself and holds the material for her. Jean cuts the material and takes it to the table, where she places it over the top of the milk bottle. The classroom teacher walks up to the table at this point and Jean says to her, "I glued the lining inside". The teacher compliments her and holds the bird-house up to show another teacher across the room. Jean smiles broadly.

That's not a dramatic record, but look how much one begins to know about Jean just from such an excerpt: about the purpose and self-direction in her activity, mixed with a way of calling on other people, children and adults, both for things she does not feel competent to do and things she probably can; about the orginality of her ideas, her level of skill with materials, her aesthetic sense, and her investment in creating an environment for small growing things, like the birds, that will be decorative and inviting and interesting (and in this care and interest she would put some teachers to shame). We know something about her fantasies of taking an egg for her own when the mother is away—and, though I would be cautious in interpretation, I would know that such fantasies are an important and personal part of this child—and we know something of her relationship to other children: that she mobilises them to her own needs, sometimes in a bossy way; that she has a certain resilience when rebuffed; and that she can also be giving and supportive of other children, telling Chris in a spontaneous way that his painting is nice.

Such observations are useful for teachers in their own classrooms. I have taken records like this back to teachers in just this form and they have generally found them both great fun and informative. No teacher in a busy room can be everywhere at once, and the things the children do and say when the teacher isn't there tell a lot about the children and how the room is working. Such records can be taken down by classroom assistants, supervisors, teachers themselves, taking a few minutes off, or more officially designated evaluators. There is a tradition of such recording in the field of early childhood, of course. Some of the major early writers in the field, like Susan Isaacs, used such material to sensitise us to children, and for some teachers and advisers, it has been almost an instinct to jot things down, when there is time, if they are interesting or puzzling. If that tradition has tapered off, it would be well to revive it.

Material like this can also be disciplined, however. Here there is also a tradition, this time in ecologically oriented psychological research, that goes back some years and is still active. It uses detailed observational material to create organised descriptions of behaviour in natural settings, to develop theory, and to systematically test hypotheses. I think this is an optimal form of evaluation in pre-school situations, especially if our purposes are primarily "formative", and I am hoping to see it used more widely and systematically.

I have been doing something of this kind with records such as the one from which I read an excerpt. I have been analysing them systematically for things that interest me about child functioning in classrooms, and that are also pertinent to the goals of the classrooms in which I have been working: for the extent of contact and quality of relationships among children, and between children and adults; for the extent of autonomous, self-directed behaviour on the part of the children; and for the kinds of learning activities they become involved in. Through this systematic process, I know some additional things about Jean, in relation to the fifty-nine other children we are observing, that would not be self-evident: that her self-directed, autonomous behaviour is greater and more consistent than most other children; that she is sociable but relatively focused, as well, on work activities that advance her own sense of mastery, both creatively and in terms of skill; that she directs other children far more than most children do but is not as aggressive as some and so on. That is qualitatively different and a lot more to know than whether her achievement scores match up to her age mates, even though that also matters and should be part of our information for evaluation. It is also a useful profile for the teacher's use in planning experiences for Jean.

Descriptive records of this sort can be collected for any purpose. If we want to know how equipment is used in the housekeeping corner, we can plan observations in that area, recording who comes and what they do, and evaluating the implications of that information for programme or equipment change. The direction of evaluation is always from the question to the gathering and analysis of information to the discussion of meaning and the implications for change. That is a functional definition of evaluation, and any of the field-based tools I have mentioned can be useful, both for immediate feedback and for long-range planning.

## SUMMARY

I have come here to talk with you about the problems of evaluating pre-school programmes because, as a nation and in individual corners of the profession, we have been grappling with the issues. We have found that it is a difficult task—that traditional research is top-heavy and not sufficiently relevant for the educational task, but that feelings and impressions do not tell us enough. So we are exploring a mid-ground: the use of systematic procedures that concentrate on processes and can be used in the natural classroom setting. It seems clearer than ever that programme goals are a matter of theory and value system. What goals we should set, in working with children, is not a research question, and we cannot make it so. We can only evaluate the goals by constant thought and discussion, with awareness that the ideas we arrive at must express our basic responsibilities to children and their growth. What research evaluation *can* do is to tell us whether we are setting up environments in the way we intend, and how the children — or even the teachers and parents — are responding to those environments. This evaluation takes its most meaningful form when it is rooted in real events, concentrates on processes, and is directly useful for teaching and learning. That is our current situation, as I see it, and I can only hope that our experience and learning have some relevance for your own problems and purposes.

# Learning in the Early Years

By Dr. PATRICIA P. MINUCHIN*

I WOULD LIKE to approach the whole idea of children's learning in such a way that we can move on before long to your own experiences and questions. I'm assuming that most of you work with children every day, and that your interest in children's learning is directly related to your interest in teaching — the issues of setting up an environment, selecting materials, working out a programme, and relating to the children. So I will end with a series of questions that may be important for teachers to consider. I'd like first, however, to outline a series of goals for learning in the early years as a general framework for later discussion.

Before I discuss the goals, I need to clarify my conception of "learning". From my point of view, learning must be very broadly defined to include various areas of growth, and it must include the idea that learning takes place simultaneously in all those areas. It is evident to most people that children are constantly learning new things about the objective world: what things are called and how they work, and concepts about shape and size and sameness and difference. It is not always so evident that they are also learning what to expect from people, how to manage frustration or fear, how much power they have to make things happen, and other things of that nature. We describe these things separately as the "social" and "affective" areas of growth, but of course that is just a convenience so that we can talk coherently about the processes. In reality, all these areas are connected. The processes of growth in intellectual power and knowledge are intertwined with the child's changing sense of self and the processes of relating to other people. We speak of "cognitive-affective interaction", theoretically; in practical terms, it means that we need to look at children's behaviour, at any given moment with a kind of trifocal of multi-dimensional vision.

Take a very simple situation with a teacher and a group of four-year-olds. They're talking about animals and looking at a poster with animal pictures. One of the children points in excitement to an animal she says is "funny" and then says she thinks it's a "hippopotamus", stumbling over the word. The teacher says she's very close, but that it's called a rhinoceros, and asks the children if they can say a hard word like that. They try it out, giggling and playing with the sounds. One of the children says it looks like a pig, and the teacher says yes, it's just like a pig but with a horn at the end of its nose. Then she asks them what the horn might be useful for, and they all talk about it together.

Clearly, that's a moment of intellectual learning: some new words, a conception of similarities and differences based on careful observation, a discussion of the functions of body form. But I think our vision is incomplete if we don't see that other things are happening at the same time: the child's sense of teacher interest and involvement in what she is pointing out; a shared enjoyment with other children; an attitude of playfulness in exploring sound, accepted by the adult; and a general respect for the exchange of observations and ideas that is guided but not dominated by the teacher. However that small moment was handled, the children would be learning many things at once—about the value of their own contributions and interchange, as well as the content of what they talk about. It may be pertinent to say here that I have done some research work with pre-school children and have found, not unexpectedly, that these developmental processes do indeed seem to be related: that children who feel a more secure sense of confidence in adults and a relatively coherent sense of self are somewhat more advanced in concept-development and direct more energy toward exploring the environment, which suggests that all these aspects of growth develop together.

With a broad and complex definition of learning as baseline, let me go on to describe six goals for development in the early years that can be served by a vigorous and carefully planned pre-school environment.

1. *The extension of the child's openness and sensitivity to new experience.* †

One of the most important capacities we may have, even as adults, is the power to connect with experience and notice what is going on around us: to focus attention on objects and events, to discriminate detail, and to think about what is interesting or puzzling about what we notice. We have sensory power for that, but its use is not automatic. Many of us drift, unnoticing, through our daily lives. Early childhood is an important time for encouraging the child's innate curiosity—the drive to approach the environment and explore it—and for educating the capacity to notice and observe. That kind of education has important implications for the psychological sense of connectedness and involvement with one's environment, as well as for the intellectual capacity to register and process stimulation.

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† For many of these ideas I am indebted to the work of Barbara Biber, whose writings have been seminal in the field of early development and education.

The provision of varied materials in the preschool, and the encouragement of their use, partly ensures a variety of differentiated experiences for the child, but the teacher needs also to highlight and underline the child's perceptions. Sometimes this is done in spontaneous, informal ways, like stopping on a walk with the children to listen to the different bird-calls or calling attention to the strange light before a storm breaks. Sometimes the teacher does it with more planning and forethought, passing around paper bags that the children can sniff to identify the orange or cinnamon stick inside, or using the presence of a pet in the classroom to guide careful observation of the facial features, the way it holds food when it eats, or the care it takes of the young. She conveys a good deal by her own attitudes as well if she is an open and sensitive person. At any rate, this is a goal for the child's development and an important one, since that alertness and orientation to new experience mediates the child's possibilities for constant feedback and learning.

### 2. *The extension of the child's conceptual capacity to organise experience.*

Here I refer to a variety of processes that are crucial for the child's intellectual growth: the capacity for symbolic thought, for concept-formation, and for relational thinking, all of which are in formation, though still quite immature, during the pre-school period. The forms of stimulation that will be both challenging and manageable for the child are not easy to arrive at, since they must fit the style and quality of young children's thinking.

In this connection, the theories and descriptions of Jean Piaget are extremely helpful. They provide a framework for understanding the particular ways in which young children characteristically filter experience and make sense of the world. I'd like to summarise a few of the main points in Piaget's conception of the "pre-operational child," since these are relevant for pre-school education.

Pre-school children live in a "here-and-now" world, according to Piaget, where perception and immediate experience are dominant. Events are not connected for the young child in a logical system; they are immediate and disconnected, so that the ice of yesterday and the puddle of today are enjoyed in their own time, with no understanding that they change into each other, or why. Fantasy and fact are often interwoven, and wish may dominate the child's ideas, so that the beloved cat who died today is expected back tomorrow. Young children are inevitably egocentric. They filter experience through the self, by reference to things that are known and familiar. *My* dog and *my* daddy are the essence of "dogness" and "daddiness". They cannot yet see the world from another point of view, and that has implications both for the way they think about natural events and for their understanding of the feelings and perspectives of other people. They can be taught to wear the outer trappings of social courtesy—to apologise and wait and share—but a true deep feeling for another person's motivations and life realities grows very slowly and is still in very early stages for pre-school children.

Certain conceptions of growth and learning accompany this theory. Action and sensation are seen as the basic modes through which young children experience the world, and they are thought to learn best through direct interaction with objects and people. The energy and motivation to interact with the environment is assumed to be intrinsic; children will actively pursue experience, if they are not curtailed, growing in knowledge as they do so. The course of development is uneven, however, and children go through periods of disequilibrium and confusion as they move in irregular spurts toward new levels of understanding.

The pre-school activities that will extend the child's conceptual capacities must somehow take cognisance of these "pre-operational" characteristics and the accompanying principles of growth. Consider the development of symbolic capacities, for instance. Eventually the child must be able to symbolise in relatively abstract forms, but pre-school children cannot think abstractly. They must symbolise first in relatively tangible forms, using materials and mechanisms that transform direct experience into something that is somewhat different but represents it.

Paintings and dramatic play and block constructions fulfil that need. In this kind of expression, the child uses objects and materials and sometimes the self to stand for (to symbolise) something else; a line of blocks is a road; a painting is a combination of shapes and colours but it represents a mother walking with a little girl; a child hops like a kangaroo across the room "as if" he or she *were* a kangaroo. Developmentally, such symbolic expression comes after the earliest forms of sensation and action, which are direct and not symbolic, and it is the precursor of the more abstract forms of symbolic activity like reading and writing, in which the child must recognise that forms and lines stand for sound and speech and ideas. These early forms of symbolism need exploration and exercise as a basis for later development, which means that materials, time and opportunity for such expression must be part of the pre-school curriculum.

Many of the classic materials of the pre-school also advance the child's grasp of relationships and transformations in the world of objects. Clay and blocks and sand and paint allow direct experience with the properties of materials, and with the ways in which they can be combined and transformed. In building a tall garage, the child learns implicitly that two small blocks occupy the space of one large one, or that certain shapes fit in to others—a concrete experience of size and shape and number relationships that underlies the later understanding of mathematical concepts. In the same way, painting a picture, moulding clay or pouring the green vegetable dye into the water exposes the child not only to the feeling of active impact on the environment (an important goal in itself); it also engages the child in the process of transforming objects from one state to another. Eventually the young child's fragmented conception of the world will give way to an integrated conception of connected processes and meaningful change. It is the active experience of creating change that provides part of the experiential base on which the more abstract logical conceptions can grow.

As another aspect of this same major goal (the extension of the capacity to grasp and organise experience), the child requires experiences that will encourage the development of concepts — those organising ideas that pull experience together and facilitate the discrimination of one thing from another. For the growing child, the relevant principles are tangible and experiential (red things, baby animals, things you can ride). Most programmes in early education include the development of concepts among their goals. The distinctions occur in their conceptions of how this might best be done, and through what materials. Some stress direct instruction, even drill, and the primary use of structured concept-formation materials. Others stress the constant use of ongoing events and the child's spontaneous activities to draw out concepts, considering that these will be more personal and meaningful for the child and thus more available for spontaneous thought. They also stress the role of the teacher in capitalising on natural experience and bringing conceptual learning to awareness. A room set up with special places for the blocks and cooking equipment and crayons educates the child, at clean-up time, to sort through materials, categorise them implicitly, and put them away with things that are similar. Discussions with children about the colour shadings in a painting, the comparative size of the buildings on the block, the different materials in the winter coats they wear to school and the different shapes of the buttons, are natural opportunities for conceptualising colour, shape, relative size and so on. There are form boards and lotto games and other materials that educate these conceptual powers, and they are important. If the teacher wants to serve many goals at once, however, including the child's sense of active involvement and meaning in the learning process, then she must use the natural events as much as possible, guiding the growth of concept formation by "teaching to the moment", as well as through the formal materials that are available.

I want to leave this second goal now and move on, but first I would like to read you an observation from a classroom of four-year-olds, just as an illustration of an activity that doesn't fit the capacities and qualities of pre-school children very well.

> The teacher calls to the children, "I want everybody to get a chair and follow me. Come on." All the children carry chairs to a clear area of the big church room where their class is held. The area is in front of a stage, and as they congregate there, several boys climb up on the stage and jump off. The teacher brings a record-player, then gets the boys down from the stage, saying, "I want you to join in." She pulls each into a chair. She then goes down the line, turning the chairs so that one faces front, the next back, etc. (i.e. musical chairs). The children are passive or restless, paying little attention to what she is doing. Three children get up and wander off. James stands and pushes his chair around to face the way Gail's chair faces. The teacher reverses it again without comment. She puts "Johnny Comes Marching Home" on the record-player and starts the children marching around the chairs, moving them along. She stops the music and tells the children to "find a seat". There is much confusion; James turns two chairs around; Paul and Michael fight over a chair; Jessie climbs over a chair to another; two children stand and watch. The teacher tells the children, "Somebody won't have a chair each time."
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> She starts the music again and says, as she stops it, "Sit in any seat". Michael runs to a row of church chairs nearby and sits down. When the music starts again he joins the group. The teacher tells him he is "out" and sends him out of line, but he comes back immediately and gets in line again. The children move around clapping their hands and stamping their feet loudly to the music. The music stops again. Jessie jumps up and down in frustration and starts to cry. The teacher says, "The last person standing up has lost his seat". Several children look at her blankly, but there are no questions or comments. Tracey is "out" next, and is sent out of line angry and pouting. When the music starts, she hops off her outside chair and joins in again.
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> The game continues. The teacher tells the children who are out that they are the "orchestra." There is no visible response to this. When

> five children are left, the teacher stops the game telling these children that they are the "winners", and then asks all the children to bring their chairs back to the table.

One could say this teacher managed badly—that she didn't explain much, that she seemed more related to the activity than the children, and so forth. But I find myself wondering what guided her selection of such an activity in the first place. Maybe she didn't have much framework for it at all. Maybe it seemed an innocuous thing to do—a game for children, without much thought about meaning and appropriate stages. Maybe she felt they would be learning to co-operate, to be in a social group, to follow directions, to accept rules. But her criteria, if so, weren't good enough. The most relevant part was the music and the stamping around—a pleasant, rhythmic use of the whole body. But children of this age do not play organised games on their own for very good reasons: because they do not grasp a systematic process. They don't connect beginnings, middles and ends. They cannot yet keep organised in their minds the relationship of particular details to the whole conception of the game and the meaning of winning. That's a developmental fact, and so the activity is meaningless as a game and the children are unlikely to learn the meaning of rules in this way.

There are other problems in this choice. In less cognitive but equally important terms, children of this age do not find it easy to sit on the sidelines or postpone their pleasure. In fact, this is a particularly difficult game psychologically for the four-year-olds from poverty-stricken homes who were in this group. The game is a symbolic repetition of a reality and anxiety in their lives: there isn't enough for everybody. The children showed a certain resilience, but they were also a little bewildered and sometimes distressed during the game. It did not grow from the needs and nature of the children themselves, and that ought to be the basis for curriculum decisions. I do not mean to say, of course, that one should never do anything with the children they cannot fully grasp. Many processes are in formation during these years, and it is exactly the nature of skilful teaching to move these processes along. The problem is to find the ways and levels that children can relate to and grow on.

### 3. *The development of language and the capacity to communicate.*

Language is primarily a form of communication. It is a way of communicating experience, knowledge and feeling, as well as an inceasingly important tool for the child's further learning. But the goal is not simply to expand vocabulary and perfect the child's speech. The child needs language to express intellectual confusion and psychological pain, to raise questions and to struggle with new insights, or to express a point of view in a quarrel. So, along with using opportunities to develop words and concepts, the pre-school teacher must be a listener and a supportive person, and she needs to provide a lot of time for leisurely discussion—the teacher and the children talking together about the things they are doing, with patience and encouragement to hear each other out and to use language as a way of clarifying ideas and making contact with other people.

It is part of this stress on language as communication, of course, that makes a teacher accept grammatical errors without correction, when a child is struggling with an idea, or immature non-verbal contacts from a child who is usually very shy. I have seen other classroom practices, in programmes that are concerned, understandably, for the restricted language development of disadvantaged children. They work on the principle of "positive reinforcement" for desirable behaviour, and within this framework they may ignore a child's contact until he or she produces adequate language. To my mind, that is psychologically unsound. I think it misses the real meaning of language as part of a larger communication process, though I share the conception that articulate verbal communication is the long-range goal.

### 4. *The extension of the child's functional knowledge of the environment.*

Children accumulate information about the world in a variety of ways: through observation and discussion and stories and trips (and TV), as well as through the paintings and block buildings and other creative forms through which they re-express and consolidate what they have learned. The key goal, always, is to make the knowledge personally meaningful to the children, a part of experience, connected to the stream of their own lives. Indeed, if Piaget is correct, that is the only kind of knowledge that can be adequately integrated. The context of curriculum depends on the particular group and subculture, but for young children meaningful knowledge is rooted in their immediate environment and the things they experience directly. Teachers often start, therefore, with questions about the room, the children themselves, the school, the neighbourhood: What's right above the children's room in school and what's down in the basement? Where does the water come from, and the heat? Where do different children live? Where do you buy food for the turtle, and if the rabbit gets sick, what kind of doctor takes care of it?

Trips into the outside world are an important tool for expanding knowledge, but an automatic trip to the zoo may not matter much, while a trip to the store for the ingredients of apple sauce the children will cook may be exciting and instructive, and a trip to the locksmith may be fascinating. I have seen the latter trip grow out of a chance event in the morning circle time of a five-year-old group. One of the children had a house key and was showing it around. The teacher brought out her keys and the children began to sort and discuss the car keys, school keys, desk keys, the reason for keys, and finally, the idea that each would have to be different —which led them to the locksmith to find out how keys are made and to watch the process.

I do not need to dwell further on the implementation of this goal. The main point is a matter of principle: to move with the energy and experiential framework of the pre-school child, teaching not disconnected or abstract facts about the world but functional things that connect with daily experience, satisfying curiosity in practical matters that generate personal associations or in psychologically important areas, like the growth and care of baby animals or the question of what fathers (or mothers) do at work all day.

### 5. *To promote the integration of experience.*

This is an important developmental goal and, in a sense, the guiding purpose behind all efforts to develop a relevant pre-school programme is the wish to facilitate meaningful experience and the child's possibilities for integrating that experience into the self. The single most important medium for integrating experience, however, is the child's own spontaneous play, especially dramatic play, which allows the exploration and consolidation of impressions, information and feeling.

We give to play considerable status in developmental theory, and consider that it serves a variety of purposes. For one thing, it is an avenue for the expression of conflict and strong feeling: anger at beloved parents, infantile wishes, the desire to be powerful and bossy, and so on. At a time when children must learn to curb or redirect very strong emotion and need, the aggressive shooting games and the bottle-sucking baby play are acceptable and relieve tension. Play also serves as a way of rehearsing and organising experience (going to the store, collecting the bus fares, etc.), and as a way of exploring many roles in life, particularly as they are carried by adults: pilots and grocers and people who cut hair, and mothers and fathers. It is an experience in social interaction and communication, since children must explain their ideas to each other and negotiate the roles they will play, but it is also an experience of relative freedom from external control. In a world of powerful adults, this is a realm where children stop and start at will, play what they like, and combine fantasy and fact with no responsibility for accuracy. Children have control of their own play, or should have, and that is an important psychological experience in early childhood. It is part of the sense of autonomy, wholeness and worth that any pre-school programme must promote. A programme needs material, space and time for spontaneous dramatic play, and a governing attitude that this is a vital part of experience, rather than a harmless and dispensable filler that keeps the children occupied.

### 6. *To facilitate meaningful relationships with others and the growth of self-knowledge and feeling.*

This is a self-evident goal, within the framework of optimal development that I have taken as baseline. Children learn something about themselves and other people in every encounter, no matter what the content. The pre-school experience will teach them a great deal, and the obvious corollary is that it must teach them wisely: positive though realistic expectations of others, pathways for expressing feeling and making contact, conceptions of their own characeristics, worth and power, and so on.

As in more intellectual areas, the personal and interpersonal issues that children bring into the pre-school situation bear the mark of their stage of growth. Erik Erikson, who has generated a theoretical framework for understanding the life-cycle, sees the young child as dealing psychologically with the dependability of other people, and with the effects of his or her own efforts to explore the environment and create an impact (the issues of "trust", "autonomy" and "initiative" in his theory). Such issues are expressed first in the family context and during the earliest years, but the young child who goes to school re-works all those issues in the new context and with new people. Who can be trusted and depended on? If the stuffed animal brought from home is lost, will anybody care and help out? What happens if you turn the wheel sharply and it breaks? If you're afraid and cry? If somebody else wants the stapler at the same time and neither one will let go? What feelings can be expressed and accepted? And so on. Conceptions about other people and the worth and acceptability of one's own feelings and efforts are in formation during early childhood, and the reactions of other people shape the direction of learning.

The most important figures in the child's learning experience are the teachers, of course—because they are the people toward whom the child transfers the trust, anxiety and conflicts of home life and previous experiences; because they determine the atmosphere of the classroom and the details of material and curriculum; because they mediate the relationships with other children and determine what kind of a social group and society the classroom will be; because they are models for how authority can be carried, and for many other attitudes toward people and learning; and because they are the people primarily responsible for what the child will learn about expressing and channelling impulse and feeling in the school environment, which is usually the first example of a major continuous environment outside the child's home. If they establish strong and positive relationships with the child, the child will identify with teacher expectations for learning and growth, developing confidence as a learner and a sense of energetic investment in school. Whatever the relationship however, teachers inevitably convey something about the child's worth and characteristics, simply because the growing self-image of the child is based to a considerable extent on the appraisal that other people make and reflect back, especially the people who are central and important in the child's life. It is a heavy responsibility for teachers.

I do not want to summarise the points I have been making. I would rather formulate some questions about the teaching task and offer these to begin discussion. If we have so many important goals for early learning, what are the teacher's decisions and functions at particular moments? How are they made? What are the concrete issues?

For instance:

How does a teacher function in relation to a child's play? This is the child's autonomous world; yet a teacher wants to build learning on the child's own experience. Does she enter to offer materials, to extend the experience? When? Under what circumstances? How?

How does a teacher balance the child's free choice with organised activities? Are there some experiences and materials a three-year-old *must* have? A five-year-old? What if a child chooses always to play with cars, building endless roads and running the cars along them for weeks and weeks, whenever he has a choice of things to do? Does a teacher intervene? How?

How does a teacher deal with children's quarrels? Piaget has some interesting things to say about the quarrelling of young children: that they do not really communicate, but that their interchange is one of the ways a child slowly builds perspective—the capacity to explain with relevance and to listen with comprehension. Yet children may learn little that's constructive from some kinds of fighting, and the quarrel may be upsetting. When does a teacher intervene, and how?

What are the mechanisms for children's co-operative learning, and what is a teacher's role in this? We know that young children are egocentric—not able to see other points of view or easily postpone their own wishes. Yet the capacity to work and play with other people is a goal of all development, and early experience is the foundation of later functioning. Does the teacher try to set this up, or let it develop spontaneously? How does she assure that children will develop more satisfaction than pain from co-operative experiences with each other?

How does a teacher carry a functional authority role? Young children need safety, security, a sense that grown-ups know their own mind. But they also need a model of reasonable, functional authority, and a chance to exercise responsibility on their own, as they become capable of it. How does a teacher carry control without humiliating children or punishing their energy and feeling? And are there ways for three-, four- and five-year-olds to carry responsibility? What kind? How?

What are the special learning needs of particular groups of children? The physically handicapped? Retarded children? Disturbed children? Do the learning goals change? The materials? The programme? The size of group? The teacher's role?

How does a teacher reconcile home and school values for the child, if they are different? Suppose the child expects to be hit for misbehaviour, or is insulting to children who obviously come from poorer homes, and none of this fits the teacher's values, though it fits the attitudes at home? What does she do? How, in fact, does she work with parents who see the function of the pre-school in one way while the teacher sees it differently?

Perhaps these are fruitful issues for discussion.

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## Alice Creswick Memorial Lecture

# Teachers in Pre-Schools: Problems and Prospects

By Dr. LILIAN G. KATZ*

I WANT TO TAKE this occasion to share with you some of my concerns about the special problems of adults who work with children in pre-schools, day-care centres, kindergartens and other child-care settings. I shall discuss some preliminary answers to such questions as: What is it like to work with very young children day after day? What does that kind of work require of adults? What factors do we have to take into account in such work? What do we have to consider when we want to help, to support, to advise and to teach those whose day-to-day work is with the very young? I have organised the discussion under five inter-connected headings. First, some overall observations of current developments in the field of early childhood education; second, some specific issues in child-adult relationships; third, some issues in adult-child relationships; fourth, some implications for the profession and finally some suggestions about what we might do in the future.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

It is well known that the field of early childhood education has greatly expanded in the last decade. This expansion is most marked in the United States, but is certainly not limited to it. Increasing interest in pre-school children and the development of programmes for them seems to be world-wide. One of the interesting signs of the times is that the term *nursery school* has gradually dropped out of use in the United States, and has gradually been replaced by the terms *pre-school* and *early childhood education*. We can only speculate about the causes of such changes in terminology. Occasionally it seems that the change is due to the use of the same root metaphor which gives us terms like *pre-cooked* and *pre-shrunk!* Indeed, developments in the field of the last decade reflect much rationalisation of today's pedagogy in terms of preparation for the next life!

More serious examination of recent trends in the United States at least suggests that the term *pre-school* captures more fully than the term *nursery school* the variety of age-groups and types of settings served by such programmes. The rubric *early childhood education* usually encompasses all programmes and classes for children up to and including the age of eight.

Alongside changes in programme terminology, some reluctance to use the term *teacher* can also be observed, especially in discussions of day-care centre staffing. Terms like *child-care worker, caregiver*, are increasingly in common usage. The federally initiated training programme developed by the Office of Child Development (HEW) adopted the term *child development associate* for adults working in Head Start and other pre-school settings.

The causes of such reluctance to use the term *teacher* are not entirely clear. We can speculate that some believe that the term *teacher* implies conventional state teaching credentials or diplomas — an implication which would be incongruent with the so-called paraprofessional or assistant status of many adults working in early childhood programmes. The reluctance may also reflect negative sentiments toward teachers in conventional public schools among many workers as well as clients of programmes like Head Start and other community-based early childhood centres. However, it may be that to a large extent, the reluctance to use the term *teacher* stems from some of the complexities in conceptualising the adult's role and functions in programmes for very young children. What proportion of the role is educational? How much is health-related? How much emphasis should be put on care? Apparently, in the old days, before the large-scale expansion, workers had a shared understanding of their roles and functions, and they did not seem to worry about how outsiders conceptualised them. In a description of the ideal qualifications for nursery school teachers Jessie Stanton was quoted as follows:

> She should have a fair education. . . . By this I mean she should have a doctor's degree in psychology and medicine. Sociology as a background is advisable. She should be an experienced carpenter, mason, mechanic, plumber and a thoroughly trained musician and poet. . . . Now at 83, she is ready! (Beyer, 197?.)

A more contemporary version of the ideal qualifications would most likely add linguistics, ethnic studies, anthropology and ecology, at least. Such all-encompassing qualifications reflect the broad range of functions adults working with children have to assume. The terms used today, like *child-care worker* and *child development associate* may have consciousness-raising effects on those among our clients, the general public as well as government officials, whose frame of reference is conventional elementary school teaching. In addition, the new names may, in a sense, be rewordings of the concept of "the whole child", which outsiders often ridicule as a cliché. But, as Millie Almy has pointed out, whatever we are doing with a child, or teaching him, we are always doing it or teaching it to a whole person (p. 50, 1975). Another way to state the question of "wholeness"' or the broad range of functions is to say that the younger the child is, the greater the range of his functioning adults must assume responsibility for. And it is precisely this formulation of the role of adults who work with young children which causes me to worry about the working lives of teachers, child-care workers and other adults who work daily with the young. I want to discuss these worries in two parts: first in terms of child-adult relationships and then in terms of adult-child relationships, although the two parts are not really separable.

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## CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD-ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

My concerns about specific aspects of adult-child relationships stem from impressions drawn from observing pre-school programmes around the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and some other countries. In general the programmes I see fall into two categories or types which I shall call Type C and Type D. (Types A and B are discussed later.) I shall characterise the two types somewhat extremely in order to more fully communicate my concerns. But keep in mind that there are no pure types in the real world!

Many programmes fit into the category called Type C. These are the well-equipped, amply spaced programmes with attractive play areas and apparatus. In the Type C programmes one can see the full range of traditional materials and activities. Whether Type C is in Chicago, California, Wisconsin, Canberra, Gloucestershire or the West Indies, one sees a house-keeping corner, dress-up clothes, puzzles, blocks, paints, climbing apparatus, etc. Of more central concern is my impression of the child-adult relationships in Type C programmes. Beyond reasonable doubt, the children in Type C programmes must see the adults as warm, friendly, helpful and supportive. The children seem to be having fun in a congenial atmosphere and pleasant environment. What worries me is my guess that if I were a child in such an environment I might say to myself, "These adults are nice and pleasant but (inside them) there is nobody home?" In other words, I wonder if the children can perceive these warm and friendly adults as thinking, responsive, genuine or real persons.

No doubt, you have all observed Type C programmes. One teacher in such a programme reported that at "clean-up time" she habitually broke into a song to the effect that "we are galloping horses". The business of clean-up was softened and sweetened in this way. Surely you are familiar with the kind but empty phrases pronounced in unvaried sweet tones, usually with the non-person pronoun "we" as in "we don't throw sand" when, in fact, "we" just did! Is such soft, sweet ambiguity really necessary? Can adults who use such patterns be perceived as real thinking, self-respecting adults? I shall explore below some possible explanations underlying these patterns.

I have classified as Type D programmes those one sees more and more frequently, especially in the United States, in which children are engaged in routine tasks, sometimes called "structured" time or "concept" time. In Type D programmes children are engaged in "academic" or pre-academic routines learning to identify and classify circles, squares, sets of animals, vehicles, etc. They are marking workbooks or ditto sheets or engaged in other pre-specified "lessons". The Type D programmes are designed or intended to be "teacher-proof". To the extent that Type D programme and curriculum developers succeed in designing "teacher-proof" curricula, then one can assume, beyond reasonable doubt, that the children could also look at the adults and ask, "Is there anybody home?" The more teacher-proof, the more likely the answer would be "No".

Note that here I am making a distinction between academic or pre-academic activities and intellectual activities. The former involve routine "learning" tasks in which children acquire pre-specified vocabulary, conventional concepts and some rudimentary "pupil behaviour" skills which are typically sampled in standardised tests of academic achievement. Intellectual activities involve exploration, experimentation and the engagement of the mind in thinking, analysing, observing, recording and in a variety of ways extending, deepening, refining and improving children's understandings of their environments and experiences.

Granted that the two Types are overdrawn, they both concern me for some reasons which are obvious, and other reasons I am as yet unclear about. Parenthetically, we should keep it in mind that there is no reliable evidence that either Type C or Type D programmes are harmful to children. A recent report of the results of Project Follow Through suggests that each type may be succeeding at different although worthwhile outcomes (Stallings, 1975). Nevertheless, I have two major concerns with both Type C and Type D programmes.

My first concern is that neither of these two types pays sufficient attention to the life of the mind or to the development of the intellect. Children in Type C programmes seem to be having fun and, in a sense, to be amused. In Type D programmes, children seem to be acquiring some of the social skills associated with academic life or schooling, completing lessons, staying on task, acquiring some useful test-taking skills, and some of the bits of knowledge tested by standardised achievement tests.

Each of these two extremes overlooks, in its own way, what seems to me a primary goal of education, namely: to engage the learner's mind and to help that mind as it attempts to improve, differentiate, refine and extend understandings (or constructions) of its own experiences. I believe that when educators make the engagement of the learner's mind their primary goal, and succeed in doing so, then learners find their education enjoyable. But the enjoyment is a side effect, not a main effect of such education. If enjoyment were our main goal, then we would not have to know very much, we would not have to study and think, to observe, to worry about our knowledge and skills as teachers. For young children an assortment of birthday parties, musical chairs, television cartoon shows would achieve the goal of enjoyment. But when engagement of the learners' minds and the refinement of understandings constitute the main goals, then alert, responsive, thinking, knowledgeable adults are required.

Furthermore, it is my impression that both Type C and Type D programmes overlook the importance of developing children's capacities to be interested in selected aspects of their environments; they seem to ignore, if not jeopardise, the development of the young child's potential disposition to become interested and intrigued by the world around, and perhaps within as well (see Katz, 1975).

To return to my second major concern about these two types of programmes, namely my impression that perhaps children experience the adults as though there is "nobody home" inside them, obviously children are not likely to phrase the problem in just that way. It is probably the case that children do not know what they are missing, so to speak. My concern about this hypothesised "nobody-home" phenomenon stems from my hunch that if our programmes are to have a real and enduring impact on children's intellectual development, the relationships between children and adults must be characterised by greater intensity than they typically appear to be.

I shall try to sketch first some ideas about how the development of the intellect and the attendant capacity to be absorbed, intrigued and interested in the environment may be related to what I shall call the *intensity* of the relationships between children and adults in our pre-school programmes. Secondly, I shall try to outline what characteristics of adult-child relationships seem to contribute to optimum intensity, and finally, I shall try to outline some implications for the working conditions provided for adults in pre-school programmes of various kinds.

### *Warmth and Intensity*

As early childhood educators we have traditionally and persistently emphasised the child's need for warmth and nurturance for optimum development. As far as I know, no one is advocating the contrary. However, I would like you to consider that *warmth* and what I have called *intensity* may be separate dimensions of the relationships between children and adults. Perhaps we can agree that when we use the term *warmth* we mean the extent to which children experience the adults as friendly, relaxed, accepting, affectionate and positive toward them. I am not sure how to define intensity. Perhaps it could be called "connectedness" or "bonding" or "attachment". Ainsworth *et al* (1974) defined attachment as "an affectional tie that one person or animal forms between himself and another specific one — a tie that binds them together in space and endures over time" (p. 100). However, this definition of attachment includes affection or warmth. For the sake of this discussion I want to use the term intensity to refer to the child's feeling or sensing that what he does or does not do, what he is or is not *really matters* to specific others. I want to emphasise, at this point, the possibility, at least for the sake of exposition, that these two dimensions could be thought of separately. For example, it is not difficult to imagine that a very young child might vary his behaviour, e.g. engage in a variety of charming tricks, just in order to keep someone to whom he is warmly and strongly attached in his company. In such a case the child's experience of the adult is of someone warm; wishing to maintain contact implies attachment—as in Ainsworth *et al's* definition quoted above. But consider also that a young child could vary his behaviour in order to avoid, reduce or otherwise minimise the contact with a specific other. In this case, the other is not experienced as warm, but is nevertheless experienced intensely: the child feels or senses that what he does or does not do, what he is or is not really matters to that other; the child is not indifferent to the other's responses. In such a case, there is an intense relationship but not a warm or affectionate one. I am not of course advocating such intense and hostile or fearful relationships. I simply want to make the point that children may be able to experience adults more or less intensely or as more or less powerful perhaps, independently of their warmth or coldness. In Figure 1, the two variables, warmth and intensity, are combined into a typology in order to show where the two types of pre-school programmes I have described might be thought to fit. If you will accept the separation of warmth and

| | | Warmth of Relationships | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | high | low |
| Intensity of Relationships | high | Type A<br>Optimum Pre-school Environment | Type B<br>"Military Academy model" |
| | low | Type C<br>"Traditional" Pre-school Programmes | Type D<br>"Pre-academic" Pre-school Programmes |

Figure 1. Typology showing the location of pre-school programmes on two levels of warmth and two levels of intensity of relationships.

intensity in this way, I now want to focus upon how this particular aspect of child-adult relationships may help to inform us about pre-school teaching and programmes.

*Intensity and Intentionality*

A central thesis here is that our traditional emphasis on warmth, and our underemphasis on intensity, indicated in Figure 1 as Type C programmes, may help account for the general finding that such programmes have had a weaker impact on intellectual development than we had hoped for. The low emphasis on warmth and intensity of the Type D programmes may not have affected children's "academic" development, but may have similarly failed to stimulate and strengthen intellectual development.

Let us look again at the simple example of the young child who wants to keep a loved one in his company. When we say "wants" in this example, we are implying that the child has *intentions*. Escalona suggested that as early as eight months babies can and do "direct responses toward other persons as a means of obtaining an effect . . ." (Escalona, 1973, p. 56). Thus during the first year the capacity for intentional behaviour emerges. (The same capacity for intentional behaviour is also at work when a baby wants to avoid another.) It is reasonable to assume that it is not only in the case of warm attachments that intentionality develops. There is probably some kind of optimum intensity (and warmth) in the responses of adults to young children such that extremely weak or strong intensity of response might equally, though via different mechanisms, disturb the development of the capacity for intentional behaviour.

The hypothesis trying to hatch itself here seems to be that optimum intensity of relationships between children and specific adults causes young children to develop their capacities for *intentional* behaviour. A related hypothesis is that the exercise of the capacity for intentionality (throughout early childhood) is related to the growing child's ability to organise his own behaviour, to set, pursue, realise and achieve his own purposes. I am suggesting, then, that the intensely (and hopefully warmly) felt relationships between young children and specific adults may be the contexts in which their ultimate capacities for individual purposeful living is shaped, strengthened and cultivated. This suggestion is strongly supported by recent research on mother-infant attachment.

What seems especially relevant to our field, however, is the possibility that the very young child's emerging and developing capacity for intentional behaviour also serves as the rudimentary form of hypothesis formulating and testing capacities. The very young child who intends to cause an effect (either "stay here" or "stay away") engages in an early form of "if-then" thinking, or perhaps "this-behaviour-is-related-to-that-effect" thinking. This possibility seems strongly supported by recent reports of research on mother-infant attachment. Keep it in mind, however, that definitions of attachment include both intensity and affection, i.e. warmth.

Ainsworth reported differences in the quality of mothers' behaviour for those infants in their first year whose attachments were what she labelled "secure". Among the differences Ainsworth reported were: the greater frequency of face-to-face vocalisation and greater *intensity* of response. Ainsworth indicated that the quality of maternal behaviour she called sensitivity involved "tailoring" of responses to match, in a highly differentiated way, the baby's signals. These findings are hardly surprising. The picture I get as a I look at this research is that in the case of the "securely" attached child there is somebody there, someone who responds, who is "home" who follows through (and is also warm), and engages the young child in sequences of connected interactions. M. P. M. Richards captures this quality in "First Steps in Becoming Social" (1974).

> One of the first things that is required . . . is for you to be sure that your partner is actually attending to you and is involved in communication with you . . . within weeks of birth. . . . There are long sequences of interaction where the first fumbling links of intersubjectivity are made. The infant looks at the caretaker's face. The caretaker looks back into the eyes of the infant. A smile moves on the infant's face. The adult responds to a vocal greeting and a smile. There is mutual acknowledgment. The "meaning" of this exchange does not simply depend on the action patterns employed by the two participants. Each must fit his sequence of actions with that of the other; if this is not done, the exchange may well become meaningless. An important means of knowing that a message is intended for you is that it follows an alternating sequence with yours.

The significant aspect of the child-caretaker relationship here is that there is a sequence of responses such that one party responds to the other in a sustained flow of what seems to me to be "behavioural response conversations". These behaviour conversations, in which each party takes into account in his/her response information or meanings embedded in the preceding one, seem to be early experiences in child-adult relationships essential to the development of the intellect, and ultimately the capacity to think one's own thoughts as well as organise one's own purposes and behaviour.

So many programmes for very young children have implemented the research on early deprivation and stimulation by dangling colourful and varied objects in front of babies. Certainly such adult activities can be stimulating. I am suggesting that mere stimulation is not enough for the intellect to grow on, but that sequences of meaningful interactions—behavioural conversations—may be required.

In my own thinking the latter concern is connected in some way to my concern for the importance of developing children's dispositions to be interested in relevant and worthwhile phenomena. Getzels (1969) defined interest as a characteristic disposition . . . which impels an individual to seek out particular objects, activities, skills, understandings or goals for attention and acquisition. As I look at the research on infants, it seems that the earliest form of this capacity is what is called the Orienting Response (Cohen, 1973) and Attentional Responsivity (Porges, 1974) and later called Attention. The work of Porges (1974) suggests that very early in life infants have the capacity for two different kinds of responses to stimulation: one is an alarm or fright response characterised by cardiac acceleration; another response seems to be cardiac deceleration and stability during information processing or attending. Optimum development implies cultivating the capacities for both types of responses. I doubt whether it is necessary to deliberately foster the capacity for "alarm" responding. But I suggest that among many, one criterion against which to evaluate programmes for young children would be the extent to which the actions of adults and other activities engage children's absorption, involvement or interest in a *sustained* way, over increasingly large segments of time, depending upon the maturity of the children.

### *Implications for Caregivers*

These concerns about warmth, intensity and children's capacities for absorption seem to imply that adult caregivers in pre-school settings be real, thinking persons capable of maintaining their concentration and vigilance in order not to miss the cues embedded in children's behaviour which *informs* them about the intentions and meanings and potential interests of the young in their care.

Bruner (1975) has summarised the essentials of early childhood programmes as follows:

> —Intellectual development is active seeking.
> —The search for meaning and regularity begins at birth. There is a constant search for cues of significance that needs nurturing.
> —Action and the search for meaning are guided by intentions and are self-directed—must help sustain that.
> —The future is constructed by each human being by coming to expect, by planning and achieving planned objectives, by doing one thing so one may do the next, by learning how to hope and anticipate with realistic confidence. The process is long and begins early—probably with peek-a-boo.
> —Human young, more than any others perhaps, are dependent on a constant caretaker who is there with warmth, certainty and effectiveness. It is in interaction with a caretaker that much of earliest learning occurs. A well-informed, decently satisfied and hopeful caretaker is worth a pound of cure. (Bruner, 1975.)

The last two of these quotations from Bruner capture the major worries to which I now turn.

## CONCERNS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Before we examine worrisome aspects of adult-child relationships I would like to share some assumptions.

The first assumption to keep in mind is that relationships between adults and children may be reciprocal, but they are not symmetrical: for example, to the extent to which a child is dependent upon an adult, then that adult might reciprocate by being dependable. But the distribution of dependency is asymmetrical in that the child experiences greater dependency than the adult. The concept of asymmetry is relevant here in that young children may feel very attached (i.e. have warm and intense relationships) to adult caregivers, but it is not necessarily the case that caregivers experience maternal attachments to each child in their care.

My second assumption is that symmetry in the attachments (i.e. warmth plus intensity) of adults to children may not be possible. Here I am using the Parsonian (Parsons, 1974) distinction between relationships which are *particularistic* versus those which are *universalistic*. According to this distinction, mothers are particularistic in the sense that they are deeply emotionally involved in the child's welfare and biased in favour of their own children, champion their own child's needs, if necessary, at the expense of other people's children. This irrational (hopefully optimum) attachment which gives rise to strong affection as well as impassioned anger, seems to be functional for parent-child relationships.

By contrast, it seems to be in the nature of things that teachers and child-care workers apply all their skills and resources universalistically to each client without bias. It would be dysfunctional for a caregiver or teacher to yield to parental pressures to give their child "a break". As McPherson (1972) has pointed out, "Whatever the teacher's style, her universalistic relationship to the pupil is central to her role" (p. 122). McPherson also points out that even though the teacher seems to use "love" in her teaching, she still has the brakes on and is still not involved. If this were not so, according to Jules Henry, "children would have to be dragged shrieking from grade to grade and most teachers would flee teaching, for the mutual attachment would be so deep that its annual severing would be too much for either to bear" (Henry, 1963).

While optimum attachment between mother and child seems essential to many aspects of early development, including early intellectual growth, the universalistic pattern for adults who work with the young in pre-school settings implies that such adults must strive for an optimum *distance* between themselves and the children in their care. The values of maintaining an optimum distance are that the distance permits the adult to act on the basis of the principles and knowledge of her field, i.e. to maximise the rational aspects of her profession. Furthermore, the distance can protect her from what otherwise would be an excessive emotional burden as already indicated in the quotation from Jules Henry above.

Another aspect of the distinction between patterns of mothering and of teaching is the degree of deliberateness, intentionality or cognitive control of behaviour. It would seem wise to encourage parents to be spontaneous rather than clinical or analytical with their own children. Excessive self-consciousness for parents may lead to "analysis paralysis". Furthermore, it may be that when parents act in terms of cerebral or logically derived decision-making, their best resolutions are apt to break down under the weight of what is and should be the emotionally-loaded nature of the relationship. In other words the cognitive controls would not hold!

On the other hand, it seems essential to encourage and train teachers to be intentional and deliberate; to plan and think through their activities on the basis of their knowledge of the underlying principles of child development and learning. Furthermore, the optimum distance permits the teacher or child-care worker to evaluate the child's progress realistically and thus to be in a stronger position to think and plan subsequent actions.

Now we seem to have a paradox: children's intellectual development seems to require relationship with adults marked by both warmth and intensity, i.e. strong attachments. On the other hand teachers and child-care workers seem to require an optimum distance from or involvement with the children. Can intense relationships, so essentially particularistic, be universalised? Are we, in our day-care centres especially, trying to professionalise motherhood? Is not the latter an inherent contradiction? These may be moot questions. Children are in pre-school and day-care settings in increasing numbers. The pressing question is what is required of us to ensure that these settings provide the best possible quality of relationships for young children?

## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROFESSION

To recapitulate the argument thus far: I have suggested that children's intellectual development may require not only warm but also intense child-adult relationships. In order for such intense relationships to develop, adults must be vigilant, attentive and in general concentrate on the sequential flow and meanings of responses. The latter implies that caretakers become deeply involved in the lives of the children they work with. I have also implied that there may be situational and pragmatic reasons why such deep involvement, or intense and warm relationships might not be appropriate for child-care workers. If child-care workers were to become as intensely involved with the children as their mothers should, they could be expected to be emotionally "burned out" within a few months. Perhaps the teacher behaviour evident in the Type C programme can be explained as teachers' efforts to cope with the potential threat of becoming "burned out". The "nobody-home" phenomenon may result from having to routinise warmth and affection. The routinisation may serve to achieve some kind of distance between the adult and her charges.

The potential threat to emotional stability inherent in working daily with very young immature dependent children is heightened by various aspects of the working conditions generally characteristic of pre-school and child-care settings.

It seems to me that one fairly reliable and universal correlation describing pre-school education is that the younger the child you work with, the less training you have, the lower the prestige and status, the lower the pay and, often, the longer the hours you work!

In the United States, working conditions in many child-care centres are scandalously poor. Keyserling (1972) summarised some findings on working conditions, saying that pay is so low that "we are asking thousands of non-professional workers to subsidize the care of children of other women. We are also excluding from the day care field many women of intelligence and competence who cannot afford to accept salaries as low as some of those described, no matter how rewarding is work with youngsters, in human terms" (Keyserling, 1972, p. 107). The low pay is also related to high "wastage" or staff turnover which, in turn may undermine the stability of child-adult relationships as well as nullify in-service training efforts.

Arvin and Sassen (1974) reported an investigation of the working conditions in corporation-based day-care centres. Not only was the pay per hour low but "teachers work through the day with no real break" (p. 15). During lunch they had staff meetings. The frequent absence of job security, inadequate benefits, plus many extra hours of work without compensation, common in the profit-making day-care centres, contribute to the generally dismal picture of the "profession". Keep it in mind here that often when teachers complain about low wages they are accused of not caring about children!

Another aspect of working conditions in pre-school settings, especially day-care centres, seems to be an apparently dreadful sense of isolation reported by many child-care workers. Many report feeling overwhelmed by the children's obvious "needs". Others report experiencing frustration and anguish from the knowledge of individual client families' personal and economic distress and the way much modern urban life impinges upon the lives of the families they serve. A caring child-care worker could easily and quickly be "burned out" from such intense involvement in clients' troubles. My hunch is that many respond to their working situation by becoming depressed and perhaps indifferent.

Such psychological depression may result in low concentration, low vigilance and a generally low rate of responding to children. Certainly low staff morale can hardly be expected to support sensitivity in staff responses. Such conditions would seem to minimise the likelihood that adults would be alert enough to "tailor" their responses to children's signals and meanings. Often adults working in such situations seem to fall into the habit of talking to each other much of the time. Their occasional responses to the children may be warm and friendly, but are unlikely to be marked by the intensity I have suggested as essential for intellectual development.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

I have a strong hunch that we cannot have optimum environments for children unless the working conditions for their caretakers are also optimum. Obviously, the interacting forces and factors impinging ultimately on the quality of children's experiences in pre-school settings must be tackled on many levels and in many arenas simultaneously.

Some advocate the unionisation of early childhood workers. It is difficult to predict the effects of such a movement when, on the whole, the larger community seems to be indifferent to provisions for the very young. What leverage is available?

Some recommend accelerating the trend towards genuine professionalisation of the "profession". But alongside this trend is some anti-professional sentiment as well. Increasing professionalisation seems somewhat unrealistic in the light of the typical compensation of child-care workers particularly.

The reduction of isolation might be helpful. The provision of advisory services (see Katz, 1973) and small but regular workshops for colleagues in child care may help to reduce the sense of isolation and increase colleague mutual support.

The development of parent co-operative day-care centres may merit further experimentation. Faragher *et al.* (1975) have shown how parent co-operative group care can have positive effects on staff morale.

Efforts to enhance public understanding of what we are all trying to accomplish may be timely. By this I am not suggesting pressure groups, conventional public relations or other types of rhetoric or propaganda. Rather, I hope we can find and maximise opportunities to deepen and clarify the uninvolved public's understandings of our work.

Increasing our efforts and programmes for working with adolescents may also help the situation in in several ways. Obviously today's adolescents are tomorrow's child-care and pre-school clients. Activities which improve their understandings of children's growth and development may contribute to later caretaking competence. But the transmission of knowledge and information alone may not have much impact. What may be even more helpful for adolescents is the provision of opportunities for them to experience relationships with caring and thinking adults themselves. I often have the impression that adolescents lack direct experience themselves with models of caring, thinking, responsive, self-respecting adults.

In summary, I have tried to show that the development of young children's capacities to organise their own behaviour to think their own thoughts may require changes in certain characteristics of child-adult relationships. Keep it in mind that the issues discussed here are urgent in societies like ours in which individuals must ultimately be able to make decisions and choices, must be able to select from among wide varieties of alternative ideas, options, beliefs, values and life styles. It may be that, in order to function adequately in such societies, it is necessary to have early experience with intense as well as warm relationships with one or more individual adults. The glowing reports we are getting from visitors to modern China and other collective societies may cause us to overlook the point that in collective societies the development of the individual organisation of behaviour, ideas and intentions may not be a matter of concern. On the contrary, in collective societies individual purposes and intentions may be dysfunctional. Perhaps the price many pay for individuality is loneliness.

Many years ago C. Wright Mills (1959) made a distinction between urgent public issues as they are officially formulated and insistent human troubles as they are privately felt. "The human meaning of public issues must be revealed by relating them to personal troubles—and to the problems of the individual life" (C. W. Mills, 1959, p. 226).

I have tried to show that the personal troubles of the young as well as their caretakers in pre-school settings are embedded in larger public issues. We seem to be in need of an officially formulated public policy aimed at improving the working conditions of caretakers and ultimatetly improving the quality of the day-to-day lives of the children they work with.

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# Working as a Multi-Disciplinary Team

## A Paediatrician's View of the Multi-Disciplinary Approach

By Dr. JOHN M. COURT*

FEW OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS in the developing child can be completely resolved by a single approach. In an age of sophisticated medicine and a developing awareness of social implications on the life and health of the child, a group of special skills and facilities is needed in the care of the child. This is particularly important in the area of developmental deviations and delay, and behavioural and learning difficulties. In a society where the concept of family is under attack and may be changing, it is particularly important to recognise the role of the family in providing for needs of the child.

The following brief clinical story illustrates some of these points. Robert is aged four years. There had been problems in his early childhood, but he seemed a lively and affectionate boy, and his mother enrolled him at the local pre-school centre. His pre-school teacher, as she got to know him, was concerned by his poor speech and use of language. He communicated little with the other children and at times his poor behaviour seemed to reflect frustration in making himself understood. On discussing this, his mother agreed that he had been slow in speaking but said that he seemed to understand well enough and she believed he would soon learn to speak now that he was at kindergarten. To demonstrate her point she told Robert to get his coat. Robert brought his coat, but his teacher noted that Robert's mother had accompanied her words with gestures and his intense concentration on his mother as she spoke suggested that he was responding less upon sound than on her gestures.

Robert's teacher suspected that his hearing might be impaired, and this was confirmed when a medical officer carried out screening tests on his hearing. Robert's mother discussed the matter with her family doctor, who subsequently referred Robert for paediatric consultation.

Robert was found to have significant nerve deafness through a wide range of frequencies, but particularly in the high-tone area. In addition he was found to have a heart murmur suggestive of a cardiac abnormality, and careful developmental assessment showed that there were areas of minor developmental delays in his behaviour. He had, moreover, changes in the retinae of his eyes which were suggestive of foetal rubella infection.

A plan for Robert's care included expert audiology evaluation and training in speech to overcome the handicap of his deafness. He was also referred to a cardiologist, who planned for further assessment of his heart murmur. An assessment of Robert's developmental delays was made as a guide to areas in which he might need special help in schooling. A discussion with Robert's mother gave her insight into Robert's problems and helped her to understand ways in which she should play the key role in helping him overcome his disabilities. By defining the full problem, it was possible to plan a rational and comprehensive programme of care and to recognise Robert's special needs. Robert's mother had many questions about Robert's likely future development, her risk of having other children with the same complaint and the help that she might be able to receive from various community organisations as Robert grew older. She was relieved that there was some explanation for Robert's outbursts of bad behaviour, as she could understand some of his frustrations.

A number of experts had been involved at various levels of Robert's assessment, ranging from his teacher in the first point of contact, to highly specialised consultants in physical and behavioural medicine in the final detailed assessment. Planning Robert's future care involved the meeting together of a number of people with special information. Ultimately, Robert's care went back to those with whom he lived and spent his day, with special care in areas that needed special expertise.

Robert exemplifies the common experience that children may initially appear to have a single problem but that on careful evaluation there are ramifications to this problem. Sometimes a number of factors each contribute to the problems. He also exemplifies the proposition that, although many people with specific expertise may contribute to the care of a child, the prime responsibility of care will always continue with those people with whom a child spends most of his time: his mother, his family, his teachers and other community or neighbourhood groups.

The association between physical, intellectual and emotional disorders of childhood is becoming increasingly recognised, and provides evidence for the need for a multi-disciplinary team approach in evaluating a child with a problem.

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As early as 1958, Malmquist had written about a relationship between educational failure and emotional disorders or social maladjustment in Scandinavian children. Rutter and colleagues in 1970 reported an extensive study on the Isle of Wight and also showed that emotional and behavioural disorders were much commoner amongst children with intellectual retardation or specific reading retardation. Specific reading retardation was particularly associated with anti-social disorders. Although there was a common association with organic brain disorder, the relationship between diminished intelligence, reading disorders and emotional disorders held true whatever the cause of the mental slowness. Winberg and associates in 1974 published a report of a study of school children examined for measurements of physical growth, intelligence, reading proficiency and socio-economic status. The results of the study indicated that all physical measurements of growth significantly correlated with psychometric testing, and socio-economic status was also closely related to psychometric scoring. Children in higher socio-economic class performed better on intelligence testing, could read better, were taller and had a larger head circumference. In a review of short stature Parkin stated that among children who were short for their age but for whom no physical cause could be found, one-third came from severely depriving backgrounds, and that these children were not only stunted physically but also retarded in tests of intellectual function. There have been a number of reports demonstrating the association between emotional deprivation and growth failure. Bowlby, in his report to the World Health Organisation, gave extensive documentation of the association between deprivation in early childhood and physical, intellectual and emotional retardation. Special sensory defect such as hearing and visual disturbance has long been recognised as an important cause of delay in the development of speech and in learning difficulties, and the association between minimal brain dysfunction, hyperactivity and short attention-span with learning difficulties is well established.

These associations demonstrate the need for a complete assessment of any child who appears to have problems in development. Developmental deviations or delays may be symptomatic of an underlying social, intellectual or physical problem, and, equally, investigation of a developmental problem may reveal other associated disorders. Those people working closely with the child and his family are in the best position to make an initial assessment of each child and choose those children for whom detailed evaluation will be necessary. From then on a multi-disciplinary approach will usually be necessary. In most cases the solution of problems lies once again with those people working closely with the child and his family, but a support service comprised of multi-disciplinary expertise will provide the most appropriate back-up team.

I believe that organisations such as major children's hospitals must develop links with the community in this way, and can provide the multi-disciplinary team of experts that complement those working together with the family in the community for the care of the child.

## Regional Development Throughout Victoria in Child Health

By Dr JOHN BEST*

ONCE YOU COMMENCE a programme which demands the development of a multi-disciplinary professional team, the consequence is the establishment of a cohesive, systematic programme throughout the State. The Early Childhood Development Programme demands this to occur. The theory involves the provision of comprehensive health promotional, preventive, and referral services for children in the first instance between 0-6 years. However, the programme naturally extends back into the ante-natal area and forward into the school health provisions.

The translation into practice involves organisational problems. Although systems evolved for various aged children have developed separately, have different structures, and involve differences in specific objectives and planning, the need to integrate resources already available is just as important as introducing new concepts and services.

It is eminently reasonable to set up one programme such as Knox as a pilot study, and say this is the model. However, with the implementation of any programme, there is soon a demand from other regions to establish their own. The model may provide valuable clues—it exposes the difficulties. However, it is a reasonable assumption that there are inherent differences in each region. This may be due to demographic variation, due to rural-urban, inner suburban, outer suburban, lower socio-economic, high socio-economic differences.

There is another important factor, recognised when one is in the process of implementation; that is the difference in personalities in the consultative process in each region.

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In one area there may be intense suspicion of the inroads of a government department, whereas in another there is a ready acceptance of the objectives of the government department. Obviously, I am discussing this in abstract, but in any region there is a unique set of group interactions, which means that anyone engaged in implementation must be aware of these circumstances. It is important that, from the early stages, the Department of Health consult with the community—that one realises that there are going to be differences and that one has a ready means of communication, so that the differences can be resolved. It is important that the "process of access" occurs, and that it occurs in the region, and that those responsible for the overall State implementation of the programme visit, on a regular basis, each region. Whether the "process of access" involves the establishment of formal or informal advisory committees is immaterial. It is the presence of recognisable lines of communication, and not token ones.

At present the Victorian Health Department is engaged in Early Childhood Development Programmes in the City of Knox; the Shires of Diamond Valley and Eltham; the City of Broadmeadows; the South-Western Region involving Warrnambool, Hamilton and Portland and environs; the Central Highlands Region involving Ballarat, the surrounding shires with the important sub-centre of Ararat; and the complex Central Gippsland area. This is complex because it involves the western end based around Warragul—the Latrobe Valley—and also the dispersed population along the South Gippsland Highway extending from Korumburra to Yarram, which has no large defined centre of population. However, as has been indicated in Knox and elsewhere in the metropolitan area, one cannot assume that any one municipality is a homogeneous group anyway. Within each municipality there are distinct areas with distinct expectations which have grown in their various ways within the one municipal framework.

To complete the current picture, there is a slightly different version of the Early Childhood Development Complex—namely, the Barwon Region Child Health Centre. This illustrates the characteristics that can change uniform concepts of integrated child health services when there is a strong local impact of ideas. This is not to say the variation should be decried, rather it is stated to emphasise the importance of this input in the ultimate direction of the project.

Yet even within the Barwon Region there are different perceptions. Even though Geelong would appear to dominate the region, there are important rural hinterlands, and an important population at Colac, where perceptions may be totally distant from those at Geelong. One does not realise these differences and seek to ensure that a project is comprehensive without due recourse to consultation; and *repeated* consultation.

Turning to the professional team itself, it is evident that already there are major services of the Department of Health — Infant Welfare, Kindergartens, and the School Medical Service, where there is direct "grass-roots" contact with the child and parents. It is essential that each of these services is involved, and that the Early Childhood Development Programme grows with the complete knowledge, participation and co-operation of these services. The genesis of the Early Childhood Programme within the Department of Health seems to have involved initially the kindergarten and preschool areas. This system has been attuned to the concept possibly more than the others until recently, when there has been a concerted effort to ensure the involvement of all.

In addition, a new stream of Community Nurses has been created. This is the Visiting Child Health Nurses. Already a training programme has been instituted in the Barwon Region. Their responsibility is to visit families, to deal with problems which have been thrown up by the Infant Welfare sister, kindergarten teacher or school nurse. Some of the problems may be readily dealt with individually by each of the former people, but it is easy to imagine the Visiting Nurses in a family where the mother is isolated, one child is attending the Infant Welfare Centre, the second child is at pre-school age, and there is one child at school. It is here that the problem should be overseen as a family problem, with visits being made on a regular basis.

If the Department of Health is to be involved in promoting health, in health education, preventive health, then it is has to ensure that all pre-existing services are responsive to the new specialist services available. The core "specialist" services made available at Knox initially were those of psychologist, speech pathologist, physiotherapist, social worker, medical officer, and a number of "specialist" preschool teachers. In addition, a research component was included. The provision of these core services has been repeated elsewhere, with the addition of occupational therapists, and in some projects, health education officer, dietitian, play therapist and consultant paediatric services. Audiologists are being appointed, with the creation of this service within the Department of Health.

This indicates a high degree of specialist differentiation, and it is essential that the people employed at infant welfare, visiting child nurse, pre-school or or school nurse level, are made aware of the potentiality of these services. In other words, there has to be education of one another in each of the early childhood development complexes.

At the outset of the Diamond Valley/Eltham Project, this was successfully implemented in the form of each specialist giving a short explanation of the role to small groups of pre-school teachers. This was extended to the Infant Welfare sisters. This led to immediate referral of problems—often mild and easily corrected. Rather than the specialist screening everybody, this was provided by the kindergarten teachers and Infant Welfare sisters, who had developed a relationship with the "specialist".

In the case of the School Health Service, the relation of the "specialist" to the school nurse is complicated, because services such as psychology, speech pathology and remedial teaching lie within the ambit of the Education Department. However, there is indication at the local level, that, despite varying departmental responsibility, liaison can be established so long as all are prepared to come together, discuss their objectives, and formulate joint action. This has been the experience of two subsidiary school nursing projects, which have been established at Flemington High School and Preston North-East Primary School.

This serves to indicate that it is essential to realise that there are differing departmental responsibilities. In Victoria, with the current separation of the Health Department into three arms, the Health Department, the Hospitals and Charities Commission, and the Mental Health Authority, co-ordination of activities into the community health area is vital. To this end, in the last nine months, regular meetings are held between each arm, to thrash out problems which have arisen.

In addition, in Victoria there are areas which appear to involve the Health Department, the Education Department, and/or the Social Welfare Department, in ensuring that the children and parents are best served by the professional resources. There are obviously differences in perception, but if these are allowed to distintegrate into professional rivalry and isolation, then the community is badly served. Reduplication is a consequence, and there are wasteful expenditures of public moneys. It is important to communicate, and to communicate repeatedly. Through these discussions problems can be resolved.

The professionals in the field need only to know that they can communicate, and have a focus for this communication to resolve their differences.

This talk has centred on the public services available. In considering the growth of any early childhood development programme, one must consider the personal health sector and the role of voluntary bodies. The doctor is the crucial first-line person in our current personal health services. The doctor sees the family in a distinct context. Unlike the Infant Welfare sister or the kindergarten teacher, who is seeing the ostensibly healthy child, the doctor is seeing the child when he or she is sick. It is therefore of paramount importance to establish lines of communication between all areas, whether they be preventive or curative. The lines of demarcation between the two, like other aspects of multi-disciplinary work, may be indistinct.

It is this indistinctness which makes co-operation imperative. If there is non-co-operation, either deliberately or accidentally, then it is the consumer of services who pays the price. In this case, it is the child and the parents.

Again, it is important to know what degree of voluntary work is being done through pre-existing organisations. This often requires a great amount of time finding out, but if there is to be communication, the detective work needs doing at the outset.

To establish the framework of co-operation, to keep people, professionals or otherwise, talking, to keep people at resolving inter-disciplinary problems, to ensure that a common "language" is being used, is a time-consuming, repetitive and often exhausting task for the implementers. It is nonetheless worth while.

It is increasingly demanding of the growth of professional managers, whose task is clearly to co-ordinate the highly complex nature of the activity and be involved. It is not any one profession's right to this role. It is a role which is earned. The co-ordinator's role in an Early Childhood Development Programme on a regional basis is a difficult one, but it shows the pure multi-disciplinary nature of this approach, that there are co-ordinators of different professions in different regions.

The professions involved at present, are pre-school adviser, welfare officer, Infant Welfare sister, medical practitioner, school nurse. Each is entrusted with managing the resource, and it is important to realise, that the Department of Health is implementing a regional programme, using available resources, employing new people where necessary, and at all times involving the community. There are problems, but being an essential optimist, I believe they can all be resolved, if people realise that their participation is wanted and essential.

# The Child with Special Difficulties

By SHEILA DRUMMOND*

As MY professional commitment is in the field of verbal communication, my contribution to this session will be strongly influenced by my present and continuing experience as speech consultant associated with the City of Knox Early Childhood Development Complex. This involves a close-working relationship with a multi-disciplinary team of specialists with interest in the child from birth to six years, and a broader association with all the adults in the child's environment.

Awareness of the special child's need for referral may come from the parents (often the mother supported by a concerned relative or friend), the infant welfare sister, or the teacher, and in seeking help she becomes the first member of the team.

The professional from whom this help is sought is usually the team member whose skill seems that most closely associated with the child's major difficulties and this skill will, in fact, determine whether the referral has been appropriate. Knowledge and understanding of expected levels of attainment seem essential prerequisites when direct referral is involved and in my field, talks with generous time-allowances for discussion have been given to various groups in the community—parents, members of staffs of infant welfare centres, toddlers' groups, kindergartens and family and day-care centres, as well as to such associations as the Nursing Mothers. Printed handouts setting out in general terms verbal communication, age-expectation levels, and indications for referral have been distributed to give guidelines for awareness of inadequacies.

The major number of referrals has emanated from the kindergarten teachers and involves children in the 3-5-year age-group. Many referrals have followed routine examination by the pre-school medical officer and an increasing number is coming from the community.

At the end of the first year of the project, it was decided, as part of the in-service educational programme, that the pre-school advisers should accompany the speech consultant during observation screening visits to all the kindergartens in Knox. This has led to an interchange of knowledge and techniques regarding speech at-risk children, to more meaningful referrals, and to simple adaptations of the physical conditions of kindergartens for children with special needs. The setting up of quiet corners with listening-posts and suitable activity material for children with auditory perception problems and the general reduction of noise through the fitting of felt covers to jig-saw-puzzle tables and of carpet to the floor of the block-building space have resulted from observation and the seeking of solutions. There is discussion with the teachers regarding the inclusion in their programmes of language-enrichment activities for all the children as well as individual activities for children with special needs.

Parents of children with at-risk symptoms are made aware, through the teacher, of the services that are available at the Resources Centre, and they make the decision to arrange an appointment with the speech consultant. The professional multi-disciplinary team is more directly involved after the first assessment of the child's communication difficulties and the interview with the parents. When the need for wider help is indicated, the close proximity of the professional working-areas and the frequent formal and informal meetings lead to excellent understanding of each member's role and to well-integrated counselling for the parents and adults concerned in the child's daily living pattern. The parents of the child whose special need is in the speech area are given practical ideas regarding the encouragement of normal verbal development and there is discussion of his general management in relation to his problem. This often involves the skill and knowledge of the psychologist and indeed it may be concluded that she should play the major professional role.

Where there are abnormal physical involvements referrals to the medical officer, dentist or physiotherapist are made and the social worker's advice is often sought. Referral for further investigation and intensive therapy may be arranged after muli-disciplinary conference. The work of the pre-school adviser who visits the mother of the very handicapped child, listening, supporting and counselling regarding appropriate activities and management, is invaluable.

An interesting multi-disciplinary project has been initiated by the psychologist in relation to several special children with major problems. The adviser associated with the child's kindergarten observes and records his activities in fine detail for a complete pre-school session and these observations are later discussed by the team members involved. Suggestions for management and counselling emanating from these meetings are taken back to the teacher and parents for comment, and implementation and the results have seemed very worthwhile.

Trained, experienced volunteers are giving excellent team-membership service in a language-enrichment programme involving cassette-recorded speech-development activities with related pictures to be used in kindergartens. This project will be evaluated by the research psychologist and may be extended as a supervised loan service to parents for use in the home, so involving the whole family in the therapeutic and educational team.

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The worth of the multi-disciplinary team approach lies in complete understanding of the whole problem and the wealth of knowledge and expertise that is applied to its solution. The integration of the various approaches thus owes much to the skill and personality of the co-ordinator of the project, who must be regarded as a key figure. Fragmentation of assessment, advice and treatment leads to confusion and insecurity, particularly for the parents who are deeply emotionally concerned regarding their child's inadequacy. The co-ordinated counselling made possible through the team approach leads those most seriously involved to positive action.

## Special Areas Where Team-Work is Necessary

By JOHN S. WILLIAMS*

IT IS NOT the problem that determines the multi-disciplinary approach, but the limitations of the professional worker.

Dr. Salvatore Minuchin, husband of one of your keynote speakers, yesterday said, "The concept of a team is a concept where each member knows his limitations." The very clever amongst us with few limitations do not need colleagues to help. This type of person is capable of fully understanding the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and family interactional variables, is capable of entering into management, treatment or therapeutic intervention at an appropriate point and is further capable of carrying the whole process through to a conclusion which best satisfies the needs of the case. Few of us have all these skills. More of us, however, think we have such skills and act as if we can handle things alone. Usually this leads to feeding our own omnipotence and providing a disservice to our patients. In busy practices it is so easy to see a problem as something a child will grow out of, or to even deny there is a problem by passing it off as just another anxious mother. If we do not use a multi-disciplinary team, we must be multi-disciplined ourselves in the way we look at a problem.

Not so long ago a very attractive child with a very concerned mother presented for a second opinion. The four-year-old child had been treated for a year through play therapy for elective mutism with no effective change. After examinations by an audiologist, clinical psychologist and speech therapist, a clear diagnosis of aphasia was made with quite different management procedures. A multi-disciplinary approach in the first place would have brought that child and family help much sooner.

The problems which most clearly demand a multi-disciplinary approach are the multi-problems. For example, the cerebral-palsied child, where there may be some degree of retardation, and perhaps speech involvement, clearly cries out for many professionals.

The retarded child who is emotionally disturbed, the deaf child with a behaviour problem, the culturally different child with a handicap, the socially deprived child with diabetes or some such disorder—these all need a multi-disciplinary approach. Few people would deny these children such an approach. But which disciplines? And of those disciplines who will take responsibility for co-ordination and management?

In the early days of child-guidance clinics the multi-disciplinary team of assessment was fixed, and no matter what the problem, the same team was involved and the same discipline was always the co-ordinator. These days, with more flexible teams, we are in danger, through a shift from a rigid hierarchical approach to a flexible egalitarian approach, of no one taking final responsibility and the team effort becoming ineffective. A team can only be effective where no member of that team wants to be a star, no one wants to parade their particular skills, where no one sets out to act unilaterally, such as giving advice about their area, without prior consultation and co-ordination with colleagues.

This flexible team-approach means greater effort. It is easy to see a child and mother, state what you see the problem is and initiate some kind of management. In the team, however, there must be capacity for delay, confidence in fellow-workers, effort in communicating what you have found with others, conviction in holding your point of view in the face of opposition and great care that differing viewpoints are worked through with the team rather than destructively presented to a family.

It is because team-work is harder that many of us keep problems that present to ourselves. Typically, three things can happen: (1) We handle the problems well; (2) we become omnipotently stubborn, refusing to relinquish our hold on a patient who does need further help; or (3) we deny the problem, say there is nothing to worry about and the child will grow out of it anyway. The first is commendable, the latter two unethical.

Barriers to good clinical practice and use of team-work can arise by a concreteness of thought which blindly accepts current fashions of thinking around particular problems. Stereotypes take over, such as a learning problem is probably a perceptual problem, a hyperactive child is suffering from minimal brain damage or, more recently, eating the wrong food, speech problems need speech therapy, or feeding problems in young children are a dietary problem. The fact is that *this* child with a learning problem may be suffering from subacute epileptic phenomena, *this* hyperactive child may be expressing his underlying depression, this speech problem may be masking a serious psychotic disorder, or *this* feeding problem may be the outward expression of a total family in distress.

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Every problem then is a potential team problem. Our resources of disciplinary manpower cannot cope with such thinking. What can be done? A team, of course, does not mean that all potential disciplines must fully examine each child and each family. A supervisor is a team member and may never see the child. It is quite possible to arrange consultations and collaboration with team colleagues which are both brief and helpful. Sometimes, where it is not possible to involve our colleagues, remember the child usually has a team with him — the family. There is a growing tendency these days to utilise the resources of the family team in preference to the professional team. Where the professional team tends to analyse the factors that go into a problem and then synthesise the results into a total diagnosis and plan of management, the family therapist attempts to maintain a total system and bring about change and symptom relief through existing strengths. Each approach has its attractions and each needs well-trained personnel.

Multi-disciplinary teams may be useful for just a diagnostic approach or for the implementation of treatment, or for both. Despite movement away from a diagnostic examination, I still subscribe to the view that management procedures can have the best effect where a sufficient evaluation (not just recognition) of the problem has been carried out.

## Ground Rules for the Multi-Disciplinary Team

By the Rev. DENIS OAKLEY*

THE THOUGHT that it might be useful for the various disciplines or professions to talk to each other has been slow catching on. That various professions should actually work together in a team setting has had a much longer gestation period. It wouldn't really take long to tot up the number of programmes in this city being served by multi-disciplinary teams.

While the benefits may be obvious, there has been some resistance to team approaches, which could be due of course to many reasons. Some professions have shown no great magnanimous spirit in sharing the mysteries of their craft; professional chauvinism is still apparent in some quarters; others may be just a little insecure about the distinctiveness of the contribution that their own profession could make in a team setting.

It is noteworthy, however, that in an age which has been seen increasing specialisation within professions, there is a realisation that no one profession holds the exclusive right of access to truth and that other professions can make a contribution to knowledge even in those areas which have been long accepted as being within the provinces of another profession.

Another significant fact is that so many major advances in knowledge in all areas are made by either: (1) individuals whose own training spans two professions, or (2) a number of professional people of different disciplines coming together to pool their knowledge around a specific issue.

It is not difficult to bring to mind examples of these phenomena. The recent publication, *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child*, was conceived by a psychoanalyst, a psychiatrist and a lawyer.

Communication between the professionals obviously brings mutual benefits, and this is most probably the main reason behind the developing co-operation. However, there may be other reasons.

I can see, as a clergyman and a social worker, a useful analogy between our present discussion and the discussion I sometimes hear on the churches' movement towards union. At one level church union can be seen as the churches' response to the theological demands of scripture—you shall be one, etc.

At another level it can be seen in much more practical terms as an expedient organisational response to a threatening situation. We can identify the lofty motives in the moves towards multi-disciplinary co-operation; the more cynical may be able to identify more practical explanations.

Without labouring the point, I think it is true to say that the status which professionals have enjoyed within society in the past days has been whittled away to some extent. This may be something to do with the changing nature of society, it may be due to our questioning of authority and the demise generally of authoritarian figures.

However, at a more specific level most of the professionals have at some stage or another been forced into corners and in the fight back they have let go some dirty punches.

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The medicos suffered a solid blow to the image at the time of the fee controversy and also as the result of their association's reactionary response to the introduction of the universal health scheme.

The public has also made another quite useful discovery: the professionals are fallible. Economists have not fixed inflation or unemployment; doctors have not fixed cancer and heart disease; teachers have not fixed illiteracy, etc.

Sharing the stage with doctors reminds me of one of Belloc's verses:

*Physicians of the utmost fame*
*Were called at once but when they came*
*They answered as they took their fees,*
*There is no cure for this disease.*

Most professions have experienced a fairly severe identity crisis, they have suffered quite serious internal upheavals, they have been de-mythologised, the strong arguments for retaining around them their professional mysteries seem to be no longer significant or necessary.

Another strong influence in the development of multi-disciplinary teams has been the increasing interest in issues and areas that require an input of more than one profession.

What comes to mind are issues like Family Law —where the lawyers let go with some reluctance even when they are forced to the conclusion that the social scientists have important information that must find its way into the law relating to families. One other area that has been important is the area of child abuse. If the complexities of child abuse are to be unravelled, then it is going to require the participation of a number of professionals working in a co-operative team approach.

Multi-disciplinary approaches to these problems are not only desirable, they are *vital.*

* * *

I want now to come to the rules that we need to apply if we are to conduct a successful multi-disciplinary team approach.

I want to suggest seven principles to you and I acknowledge the assistance of Richard Balbernie's book, *Residential Work with Children*, in compiling these equal points. I would like to speak just for a few moments in general terms about them.

*Ideally:*

1. Each professional staff member will feel he is an essential part of the total organisation performing a necessary task and in informal but disciplined mutually facilitating interaction with the other staff members.

2. Each professional person will feel his own defined task to be essentially contributing and related to the outcome of the task and common endeavour of the total enterprise. Each professional staff member must experience the satisfaction of bringing some essential part, however small, of the total task, to a satisfactory conclusion.

3. Each professional person will understand the job being done by others (and respect this).

4. Each professional person will be conscious of the contribution of his role and the clarity of his area of professional responsibility and aware of how this contributes to the effectiveness or clarity of all other roles in the enterprise.

5. Any discrepancy between what is desirable and what is possible will be objectified and remain a matter of definite concern, as will the gap betwen the job and what should ideally be done, and the job actually being done.

6. Each professional person must be clear as to what is not his task (i.e., when he is moving inside or outside the boundaries of his primary task and what is being left undone when he moves outside it). It is important to be clear about what is not being done.

7. Each setting will have a single, clear primary task and defined leadership function and no mutually confusing or conflicting tasks will be performed within the same setting. Where one task confuses another, a separate setting will be required for its performance. Each setting will undertake a clear professional responsibility with a beginning, a process, and a specified point of termination.

There must be competent leadership.

When structure and organisation are not sound, role boundaries and interfaces will be obscured and professional interaction processes become confused, and this tends to heighten uncertainty and anxiety.

This point is raised as an important issue in Felix Frankfurter's introduction to Alfred North Whitehead's book, *The Aims of Education.* He warns against what he considers to be a serious hazard to multi-disciplinary work. Concerned lest the boundaries of each professional domain be eroded in a headlong effort to foster mutual enrichment or cross-fertilisation, he warned of "cross-sterilisation" of the disciplines, where uncertainty in one profession would be resolved by resorting to dubious truth in another.

In the inter-disciplinary management of child-abuse cases we not infrequently face this trap, he continues. At the end of a difficult and frustrating case discussion, the only consensus which may be reached is, "We need a psychiatric consultation", when everyone knows that the consultant's findings may only contribute further to the ambiguity and uncertainty about where to go and how to intervene.

Also out of fear of making a management mistake, disagreeing parties conclude that the only suitable form for discussion on conflicting perspectives is the courtroom, putting the judge in the difficult position of having to resolve conflicts among social workers and doctors and putting the family through an exceedingly stressful experience.

I'm reminded of Philip Andrews's poem:

*The Meeting*

*They were all there*
*the usual ones,*
*doctors, lawyers,*
*intellectuals,*
*social workers,*
*politicians, clergy,*
*and the vicar called us to order.*
*The purpose was to discuss*
*the problems of Richmond.*
*We'd met before,*
*we'd discussed them before,*
*we all agreed*
*that there were problems,*
*but we couldn't agree*
*just what they were;*
*what priority they had*
*and what to do about them anyway.*
*So we talked.*
*And became increasingly frustrated,*
*increasingly irritated,*
*increasingly impotent.*

*Theories flow thick and fast,*
*research statistics littered the floor*
*of our brains,*
*ideas and counter-ideas*
*vied for acceptance.*
*We debated for hours*
*until,*
*as usual,*
*we came to the point*
*where the next obvious step*
*to everyone*
*was to actually do something;*
*then we shut up*
*and went home sheepishly.*
*Four boys on*
*the church roof*
*were stripping off the lead,*
*they had been doing this over our heads*
*as we had been*
*discussing their problems,*
*in language over their heads.*
*Ironical, I thought,*
*I suppose they're doing wrong*
*but*
*at least they're wise*
*not to wait for us*
*to solve their problem.*

An understanding is needed by the members of one discipline of the objectives, standards, conceptual bases and ethics of the other participating professions.

As a social work student, I remember attending a staff meeting of social workers in a hospital and the most frequent complaint was the doctors were only referring geriatric patients who needed assistance in filling out their hearing-aid application forms.

It was a stage that social workers went through in hospitals before the memory of the hospitals' almoners was finally laid to rest.

This leads to the second and related problem—that is of *verbal communication.*

An understanding of the peculiar professional jargons of other disciplines.

Out of every profession come words and groups of words that have and convey a particular or familiar meaning within the boundaries of that profession—often they can be words that are in common usage and yet, applied in a technical sense within the profession, may take on a peculiar meaning (using *peculiar* in the sense of *unique.*)

There must exist within the team setting that atmosphere of co-operation and trust that means there is no hesitancy about questioning the members of other professions about the precise meaning of their terminology.

*Finally, the factor most crucial to the effective working of a multi-disciplinary team is the issue of leadership.*

The leader and ultimately he alone, has the function of defining the primary task of the enterprise and seeing that this task is carried out with optimal efficiency.

I guess any professional person here who has worked in a secondary setting would know the difficulty of working in a situation where the objectives and concepts and *modus operandi* of their profession were not clearly understood.

*The question of staff morale.* While this is dependent to a very large extent on the quality of the leadership in the team—morale cannot long be sustained on collusive social and personal relationships—it must be real, based on mutual professional respect in relation to actual task performance, the actual quality and effectiveness of the professional job of work done by each contributory staff member as essential workmen in the common endeavour.

While we do not want to move into the vagaries of organisational theory, the fact is that in a properly organised work setting professional roles will facilitate the clarification and performance of other roles.

What has been found in multi-disciplinary settings is that any ill-defined role (that is a role not properly clarified disciplined, essential or task-oriented) will likely contaminate and lower the general morale (at all levels).

What is required is a reliable structure of defined, respected, mutually understood, protected and facilitatory essential components.

Without inspired individual, imaginative and respected leadership staff morale can be destroyed—the organisation can become routinised and unresponsive and in a sense no longer serve the legitimate purpose for which it was created.

Leadership will be the most critical determining factor in the performance of the team and its operation will depend on the relative independence, integrity and inspiration of the person in the office.

# Aspects of Day Care

## Social Change and how it Affects the Family

By Dr. ANNE HILLER*

DESPITE VARIOUS FEATURES of our society which have attracted a disproportionate amount of public and especially media attention, essentially many of our basic institutions, values and styles of life have remained fairly similar over the last twenty to thirty years and seem likely to do so for the next decade or two. So, without suggesting for a moment that social change is not substantial or significant, it is nevertheless the case that for many practical purposes and in the relatively short run, key aspects of our society remain more or less the same.

Basically, we in western society understand by the family a unit which has some legally recognised identity and expectation of permanence, comprising two adults, one male and one female, accepting certain mutual rights and obligations, sharing a home and income, providing for each other's sexual, social and emotional needs and which also includes one or more children of whom the adults are usually the biological parents. (This is what has come to be termed the nuclear family.) To be even more precise, the typical number of children is two or three, though there are variations between socio-economic, ethnic and religious groups in average family size; the age of marriage is most commonly early to mid-twenties, the reason theoretically being what we know as "romantic love"; and the division of roles is still such that the main income-earner is the male and the care of home and children is primarily the task of the female, with a corresponding differentiation in the functions and characteristics of father and mother.

I propose to look first briefly at the kind of sweeping statements that have been made about the so-called decline or death of the family. Then I intend to discuss some of the major features of contemporary society which have direct bearing on the current state of the family and which have mostly involved some social change even since the 1940s but certainly over this century. And thirdly we will see how these changes are affecting or have affected the family.

Although I have been given a very broad brief, I feel under some constraint to try to make my analysis relevant to the general topic of these sessions and hence it is the child-rearing functions of the family that I take as the most critical aspect of family life for present purposes.

I'm looking at how to locate in our society the need for and present conception of day care. Hence I try to show why the need for community provision of child-care services is there and will leave the issue of what sorts of day care, provided by whom, where and so on for those like yourselves who have the knowledge and experience to be able to tackle these sorts of questions. I should add that in my concept of the family I would include other units which, though lacking the legal basis to the marital bond between the adult male and female, in all other ways approximate to "the family" as we know it. I am ignoring for the present discussion some important variations in types of family which exist in our society as between generations, classes, ethnic groups, religious denominations and other such groups. I have also ignored certain alternatives to "the family" which are appearing and attracting interest, as these involve small numbers of people and have an unknown survival rate. To say anything about social change and the family in a limited period of time unfortunately requires that we generalise (something sociologists are all too willing to indulge in) and hence inevitably oversimplify the situation.

My main argument will be that, although there is little evidence that the family is actually on the decline (i.e. decreasing in numbers and popularity), in a number of ways at least in its most usual form it is under some stress. Despite the fact that the general community appears still to value and support the institution of the family and still the vast majority of people during their lives not only come from a family (their family of origin) but also construct a family of procreation for themselves, other things are going on in our society which make it difficult for its members to see clearly what their roles in the family should be or to carry them out as satisfactorily and satisfyingly as they are led to believe they should or perhaps did in the past. The situation is further complicated since it seems the effects of these influences are not all one way and simultaneously people may find themselves exposed to contradictory pressures. It is partly for this reason that any predictions about the future of "the family" are hazardous, a number of alternative directions of development can be detected, except one can fairly safely say it will be around for some time to come.

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The prophets of doom build their case on some of the same grounds as we shall go on to cover but also add in their own selective interpretations of current events. Divorce statistics rather than rates of marriage and remarriage are cited; those functions of the traditional family which are now carried out by other agencies (health, education, etc.) are stressed but the other side of the question is downplayed—the greater personal involvement in and expectation of satisfaction from relationships between the members of the nuclear family; the decline in traditional forms of parental (especially paternal) authority, along with a posited decrease in all forms of moral authority, is deprecated but no attention is paid to the development of alternative forms of control, which in our society can include some very powerful other institutions such as schools, the labour market, employers, and state authorities, and also some shift of emphasis generally towards self-control and self-responsibility even among the young. Apparent changes in sexual morality affecting the relationships between adults, and thus the marital relationship, are blamed for higher divorce rates, mental illness, juvenile delinquency, etc. But it is hard to establish whether major actual changes have occurred or whether different and "deviant" sexual behaviour has just become more public and visible, and hard to demonstrate clear links between change in sexual and other morality and these other phenomena. Permissiveness, which seems to include both changes in the content of morality and in the nature of social control, is particularly stressed. The difficulty as I see it is not that these factors do not have serious effects on the family and on other aspects of life in modern society, but to demonstrate that these and only these are responsible and hence that they can and should be altered or removed. In other words, that the problems facing the modern family are solely due to certain other features of society which are themselves clearly undesirable. As many sociologists have observed in many contexts, unfortunately things are socially and morally more complex. "Good" institutions and beliefs may have undesirable as well as desirable consequences on other institutions, and "bad" attitudes and practices may have some good effects.

A number of processes are currently of importance in determining the nature of contemporary society and of the family in particular, these processes also having some mutual influence on each other. In the first place, the *economy* can be seen as being responsible for several aspects of our present life situations. A steadily increasing percentage of married women has been entering the work-force especially since the war, to the point that over 50 per cent of employed women are now married. Overall women constitute about one-third of the labour force, although they are concentrated in certain industries and sectors — factories, services and commerce in particular — and in jobs requiring lower degrees of skill and educational qualification than men. This trend seems likely to continue (though with fluctuations according to general levels of employment and unemployment).

The needs of the economy can also be held responsible for persistent and extensive campaigns to persuade people to buy more goods and replace more frequently those they already have in order that production can profitably go on expanding. The pressure to spend, which is particularly directed by the media towards the woman as housewife, is clearly linked to the previous trend. Women who accept the media images of a "good home" for their husbands and children, measuring this in largely materialist terms, are more likely to be attracted back into paid employment at all income levels in order to increase relatively their living standards.

The Australian dream, which comes close to reality for the vast majority of people, is their own home and garden. In order for this to be a practical possibility, given the concentration of population in urban centres in the south-east corner of the country and given the steadily increasing size of cities, suburbs have developed at constantly greater distances from city centres and in many cases with long time-lags between the building of houses and the provision of the necessary services and amenities. For more and more young couples, achieving the dream means moving out of the city or older suburbs into new suburbs, often leaving previous kin and friends for an unfamiliar and barely established neighbourhood.

Even where this does not happen, this residential pattern has the characteristic of confining and insulating each family within four walls and a fence and of making the members that much more dependent emotionally and practically on each other, which has disadvantages as well as advantages.

For various reasons, which we need not go into here and which are anyway not fully understood, all western societies have been experiencing a decreasing birth-rate. Although marriage is no less popular, each couple is having fewer children so that typically by the age of thirty or so, women have had all the children they are going to have, and indeed their two or three will probably be at school, leaving them with perhaps another ten to fifteen years of active motherhood, and then what? Early marriage and contraception have brought about this state of affairs for women and clearly pose a major question for women, who have a life expectation on average of at least seventy years.

In addition, their housewife role has been steadily reduced in time, energy and skill thanks to modern technology and the availability of a wide range of mechanical aids. In fact one can cynically see the recent resurgence of interest in weaving, spinning, bread-making, preserving, gardening, home renovations, etc., as an attempt to find a justification for and obtain greater personal satisfaction from the domestic tasks.

Our technologically minded society has also given rise to a greater emphasis on knowledge rather than tradition or experience in relation to what were previously defined as "natural" abilities, parenthood and motherhood in particular. A series of experts in hygiene, nutrition, psychology, baby-care, education and so on have pronounced on everything to do with children, from conception through childbirth to all aspects of child-rearing. However, education for parenthood hardly exists. Whether or not such formal educational programmes are possible or desirable, the fact that an expectation has been created that expert knowledge is needed but that this is not provided causes problems for all those involved.

Finally we come to the whole range of changes associated with the recent feminist movement, and more generally to claims for sexual equality and female liberation. The most significant aspect of this process is the alteration in female perceptions of themselves and their roles in life, which in turn has led to wide ramifications in many areas. Alternative conceptions of women's nature and life-styles have had effects on their perceptions of motherhood, wife-husband relationships, their attitudes to education and occupation, their acceptance of the rights of others to make decisions for and about them, among other things, and all this rethinking affects even women who in no way directly or personally identify with the movement.

What does all this mean for the family and particularly for children?

The typical situation in Australia for children to be born into and grow up in is increasingly likely to be one of living in an outer suburban area of a large city in an area with inadequate services, particularly transport, child-minding and recreational facilities, with a mother who returns to paid employment as soon as she feels able and who subsequently has to do two jobs, one inside and one outside the home. Economic pressures and consumerism are likely to affect both mother and father for a major part if not all of the child-rearing phase of their life-cycle.

Changes in adult sex roles are still being explored and negotiated and are going to produce some friction, resentment, confusion and strain in one or both sexes. The wives also have to come to terms with or otherwise resolve competing notions of motherhood—is the better mother the one who always puts her children first or the one who also values herself and her own needs? Or how to weigh up the gains from taking a paid job in terms of material comforts against possible losses due to less time to spend on the house, on preparing meals, on caring for her family? Physical separation from kin plus greater stress on a considered and informed approach to child-care may lead to a situation in which many mothers, particularly with a first or later difficult child, are uncertain about what to do or whom to ask. Sources of assistance and advice may not be readily available or not recognised as such. Popular images of naturally perfect mothers and children still persist in the media and seem to lead many girls to believe, despite other contrary evidence, that this is what motherhood will be like. When the reality departs from this stereotyped and romanticised picture they can only conclude *they* are at fault. Some general acceptance of the notion that women and mothers are human, that they are entitled to pleasures, relaxations and satisfaction of their needs, not just required to make self-sacrifices, has also created problems, since the presence of children who are primarily the responsibility of their mothers inevitably produces some conflicts of interests over the allocation of time and other resources which have to be dealt with. In all these ways the gap between expectation and reality is such that many mothers of young children have real problems in coping with their situation. It seems that, without supportive family networks in the same locality and the dependability of tried and tested traditional family remedies and solutions to problems, and given the rather tenuous and limited social links between neighbours and friends, a whole range of government-financed support services available for all mothers of young children if they wish to use them will become the means whereby normal and abnormal crises and difficulties in child-rearing can be overcome. Additional or more extended child-minding facilities will also be required, as is now coming to be acknowledged, for the significant minority of women who take paid employment before their children are old enough for school. At present the principle seems accepted that certain special categories of people—deserted and separated wives (and husbands), single parents—have special needs that the state should supply, but a more fundamental issue which is now being discussed still needs to be settled by the community. Should the average family be assisted by day-care and other services so that mothers can take full-time paid employment or should the state financially subsidise mothers by paying them a wage or pension to stay home? And secondly, should it be the right of every mother, whether working or not, to have access to free child-minding facilities to use as she sees fit? (The even bigger question, should we approve such facilities, and which we cannot go into here, is the nature of any such services—provided by whom, in what premises, with what staff, etc.)

However, it should be recognised that should such changes in the provision of services occur, other problems may arise. In so far as the general community were to accept such a responsibility, it may demand certain corresponding rights and challenge the prevailing assumption supported in law that children belong to their parents and that only where their life is in danger (or in other such extreme circumstances) can anyone intervene, question the parents' manner of raising their children or remove a child from its parents. Were child-rearing to be more generally shared in the community, then it is at least possible that the more or less exclusive legal rights of parents over their children would come to be seen as undesirable. It is in this way that the complicated chain of cause and effect works: a change in one area may give rise in time to changes in others which may not originally have been thought of and may be opposed by some of those who worked for the initial social change.

What has been said is that being a parent is changing, as the family is changing, along with other features of our society. People are gaining (they and we believe) from redefinitions of roles, changing opportunities for work, leisure and self-expression, changing material and other living standards. But at the same time there are some stresses and problems which have to be coped with; some of these we are facing now and others will arise in future. I have tried to analyse some of the factors which I see as contributing to the situation we have in which the question of universal state provision of additional and/or alternative child-care facilities over and above what is supplied by parents and particularly mothers and what is available for older children through the education system is demanding serious consideration. Although there are indications that other ways of meeting these needs may be found, at present they do not constitute a real solution for more than a tiny, and probably untypical, proportion of the Australian population—I'm referring here to new residential patterns, such as cluster housing, which can alleviate some of the effects of privatised living, as well as what we term collective or communal households where quite different social arrangements for adults and children are being developed. The provision of these kinds of services by government—state or local—or by community-based groups or by a combination of both seems to offer the only feasible immediate solution for many families and it is this assumption which has lain behind what I have been saying today.

## Day Care in a Multi-Cultural Society

By the Rev. Dr. DAVID R. COX*

ALTHOUGH Australia has always been a country of immigrants, it is only in the last decade or so that its multi-cultural nature has been recognised. This recognition has been due in part to the growing proportion in the population of overseas-born (20 per cent in 1971) and in part to the increasing diversity in the cultural composition of the population. The movement to Australia in large numbers of Turks, Spaniards, Indians, Sri Lankans, Anglo-Burmese and others is a comparatively recent phenomenon.

In the same decade more of the immigrant population have come to feel secure about perpetuating their cultural origins, and some are even demanding the right to do so. In this they have been supported by a growing number of Australians who either recognise the justice of this claim or have developed an appreciation of the value of these cultures and a desire, therefore, to see them maintained.

Australia is now in fact a multi-cultural society, and this has important implications for every aspect of social welfare. A population which is diverse is likely to require diversity within the range of welfare facilities and programmes provided, and greater sensitivity to the existence of differences on the part of welfare personnel than might otherwise be the case. I think it is true to say that in very few areas of social welfare have allowances been made for the multi-cultural nature of our society. Institutions are too frequently modelled on structures developed to serve a previous generation, staff are too frequently selected and trained with little regard to the population they serve, and programmes are often designed to meet the needs of the institution providing them rather than of the population which is to utilise them.

What relevance does the migrant element and cultural diversity in our population have for the provision of day-care services? To answer this question we need to examine the situation of migrant children in greater detail.

### THE SITUATION OF MIGRANTS

There are a number of aspects of the situation of migrants in Australia which we need to recognise because of their direct bearing on child care.

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First, the prevailing socio-economic status of many migrant families makes it imperative that both parents engage in paid work. Studies have indicated that migrant women from all the main birth-place groups have a higher work-force participation rate than the Australian born. Nor is this always a matter of choice.

"The findings of the Melbourne Family Formation Study show that three-quarters of southern European-born wives 'believe that wives should only work when forced to do so by poverty. The group which most disapproves of the employment of married women is thus the group with the highest proportion of working wives. That this is the effect of poverty overcoming disinclination can be seen from the fact that two-thirds of the southern European wives who do work would gladly stay home if their husbands' wages were raised to the level of their joint income' (Ware, 1974: 192)." (Jean Martin, "The Economic Condition of Migrants" in *Welfare of Migrants*, Australian Government Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, Canberra, 1975.)

Moreover, many migrant men augment their basic income through overtime and second jobs more than is true of the rest of the population. The net results of both these trends are that parents are often not available to their children for reasonable periods, are often tired and very frequently in need of day-care facilities for their children. Many of us are very much aware of the families where husband and wife work different shifts and ostensibly care for pre-school and other children while they sleep. Often this is a direct outcome of insufficient day-care facilities linked with the financial pressures impinging on the family.

Second is the question of the costs of day care. The costs of private centres where fees are not subsidised represents such a large proportion of the mother's wages that many are forced to seek out alternatives which are unregistered and frequently inadequate.

Thirdly, we must not forget that many migrant parents are unacquainted with the situation where young children are entrusted to complete strangers. For those migrants who have come here from small rural communities in southern Europe, Turkey and elsewhere, where children most commonly commence school at seven, and where the kin group is available for child care, entrusting a three- or four-year-old to strangers is a big step.

Fourthly, the inability of many migrant parents to speak English represents much more than a communication problem. It makes it very difficult for them to assess, and develop a trust in, the staff of day-care centres. Nor can they express their wishes or voice their concerns. Nor can they easily participate in any meetings or schemes which the centre may organise, unless the centre makes special provisions. When there is no communication, the centres are not only staffed by strangers, but the strangers are virtually inaccessible at the levels which really matter.

Finally, the existence of a diversity of opinions on child care must be recognised. Migrant parents are, for example, not infrequently unhappy about the type of food that is provided in some centres. This may be based on an inadequate understanding of nutrition, but this does not mean that the attitude can be ignored. Centres may, for good reasons, decide that they cannot accede to the wishes or demands of migrant parents, but there are times when a compromise, linked with an effort to educate, may be the best course.

If particular groupings of migrants are more impoverished economically than others, if they hold views that are divergent from those generally prevailing in the new environment, or if their past experience has been limited, then the fact of migrant status must be borne in mind when day-care facilities are developed.

## THE MIGRANT CHILD'S SITUATION

A second area calling for sensitivity embraces those situations in which migrant children are likely to find themselves because of their migrant status. Some aspects of these are important for the day-care field.

First, a child of migrant origin is likely to have experienced three or four years of primary socialisation in a different culture. It will have developed already certain expectations of others and an understanding of its own role. It will be accustomed to particular forms of handling and specific routines. Entry into day care organised by staff of a different cultural background may well mean entry into a foreign world peopled by strangers.

As a new arrival in a recently arrived family, the child may also be part of an insecure home situation. Insecurity is naturally common among recently arrived, and the child senses this insecurity and is affected by it. The possibility of several physical moves, and the loss of persons and objects in which the child had an emotional investment, can affect the child directly.

Thirdly, we must not overlook the importance of the native tongue to the child. It has been quite frequently suggested that serious emotional problems can result from the child's inability in any situation to use his mother tongue. Language bears an important relationship to our sense of identity at every stage in development, and the pre-school child is no exception. If he cannot communicate, and if use of his native language is not encouraged, his self-identity may well be impaired. It was, I think, in a church-run kindergarten that the bi-lingual approach was first tried in Melbourne. Today more and more teachers and others are realising the importance of the child's development of his native language and the positive effects, on both a child's sense of identity and of belonging, of hearing his native tongue used at school or elsewhere. There may be practical difficulties in organising this in some situations, but the benefits should not be overlooked.

Fourthly, the importance of the mother-child relationship at this age must be remembered. All pre-school services should be designed to strengthen this bond and never to place it in jeopardy. Children are quick to interpret the words and actions of significant adults, and any step taken by a day-care leader that can be interpreted as criticism of any aspect of the child's culture of origin is dangerous. The greatest degree of care and sensitivity is called for in reacting to the child's clothing or behaviour. To suggest in any way that it is foreign and unacceptable may be to suggest that the mother who encourages it is foreign and unacceptable.

Finally, we must remember that the non-English-speaking child has great difficulty in communicating his needs. This can apply to the basic needs of toileting, drinking and so on, but the problem is greatest with those needs which the child finds difficulty in verbalising, even in its native tongue. The day-care leader or teacher needs to be a step ahead of the child in anticipating a need and encouraging the child to express it.

The migrant child's situation does differ in a number of ways from that of the non-migrant, even though their basic needs are those of all children. Day-care staff, as well as others, should be able to project themselves into the migrant child's situation, to be aware of the possibility of peculiar needs and to be able and ready to respond in appropriate ways. To do this they may require special training.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE

Any major grouping of people develops its own peculiar ways of handling life's situations. These are, at any point, the cumulative result of a long history and are also constantly in some degree of flux as a result of changes within the group and pressures from outside. Cultural differences between ethnic groups are very commonly found in the area of child care. Different groupings have different attitudes towards feeding, weaning, clothing, washing, disciplining and educating children, to name but a few areas. What relevance do cultural differences have to day care?

Clearly the strength with which cultural attitudes are maintained varies between ethnic groups and from family to family. It is invariably dangerous and erroneous to assume that the members of an ethnic group will act in a uniform manner. Having made that point, it can also be said that, particularly in traditional societies, attitudes revolving around the feeding, clothing and general care of younger children tend to be distinctive and strongly held. Taking some southern European groups as our example, several important trends are apparent. One is to treat pre-school children as babies, carefully mothering them and doing very little to encourage self-reliance. A second trend is to hold strong attitudes about what types and quantities of food are beneficial to the child. The general tendency is to emphasise quantity rather than quality, and to regard a child with plenty of weight as a healthy child. Thirdly, there are strong attitudes towards clothing with the tendency being to emphasise protection from cold and from the sun. Traditionally many southern Europeans do not encourage exposure of the body to the sun and a somewhat higher incidence of rickets than we are accustomed to has been attributed to this custom. Many Australian parents would regard many southern European children as over-clothed.

Then there are a variety of behavioural forms often thought to be more characteristic of migrant parents (I suspect mainly southern European) than of non-migrant parents. There is, for example, the tendency to rebuke children sharply, often accompanying the rebuke by a clip over the head or by pulling the ear. In practice, where this does occur it is usually balanced by very open and physical displays of affection, but perhaps this follow-up is too often missed by the observer. Another example might be an acceptance of lies, exemplified either by laughing at the child's lies or by telling lies to the child. For example, "The leader is a doctor, so you had better behave"; or, "She will call a policeman if you are naughty"; or "Go on, she has some lollies for you". Coupled with the use of untruths there is the use of threats which are clearly unenforceable, a point which the child soon becomes aware of.

It is to be expected that some of the actions of parents will anger, annoy or confuse staff. Alternatively, the staff may, consciously or unconsciously, adopt an approach with a child which is in direct opposition to the parent's approach, and this may confuse the child. There are some important issues here. Should staff seek to emulate the parents? Even if they decide that they should, can they in practice ignore their own values and attitudes? It seems essential that staff be, at the very least aware of the possibility of cultural differences and constantly alert to the individual child's needs in a situation of possibly conflicting cultural messages. Probably there is no one answer to the questions posed but the need for awareness and sensitivity is paramount. How one in practice reacts will, and probably should vary.

## POSSIBILITIES IN DAY-CARE STRUCTURES

We are not confronted with one fixed and immutable model of day care. If we were, then we could go no further in a multi-cultural situation than suggest that staff be sensitive to the possible difficulties of migrant children in adopting to Australian or Anglo-Saxon oriented day care centres. In fact, alternatives are available.

Just as there are ethnic schools, religious centres and social centres, so it is possible to have ethnic day-care centres. In areas where a particular migrant ethnic group predominates there seems to a strong argument for an ethnic day-care centre, especially designed to meet the peculiar needs of those children and their families. Day-care workers should be ready to perceive such a need and willing to co-operate with members of the ethnic group in exploring further the concept and assisting in the development of facilities when such are clearly called for. Ethnic groups vary and no one answer will always be appropriate.

Where an ethnic day-care centre is not appropriate, ethnic corners within a community day-care centre might be. These corners would allow children to retreat to an area where their language and culture prevailed. This would assist children to feel at home, assist in the development of learning which has originated at home and possibly help to bridge any gulf existing between the various ethnic groups.

The participation of migrant parents on the committees of day-care centres, although not always easy to arrange should be an important goal where migrant children are a part of the centre. Their participation should increase the sensitivity of committee and staff to the needs of the children using the centre and enable them to plan appropriately. This may, however, require a structure within committee meetings to enable members to contribute in their own language when it is difficult for them to contribute in English. It may require also the careful planning of committee agendas to give migrant parents the opportunity to raise questions and make suggestions.

Finally, the centre's programme should reflect the backgrounds of the children involved in the centre. The choice of songs and stories, the provision of books, the choice of games, the wall decorations and, indeed, every facet of the centre's life should reflect the cultural diversity which the children represent. Such a programme is enriching for all concerned but essential to the child of migrant origin. And, after all, the purpose of any welfare facility is to meet some particular needs of a certain population. It is important that day-care organisers and leaders appreciate the peculiar needs of migrant children and plan carefully to meet those needs in the best ways available.

# The Children's Centre: an Integrated Service

By Sister PEG PAINE*

THE OXFORD DICTIONARY says of "integrate": "made up of parts, whole, complete". The parts of the Children's Centre service are:

1. Half-day kindergarten for two groups of twenty children from the local community.
2. Full, part-time and occasional care for fifty children 0-5 years.
3. Facilities for a small group of young children intellectually, emotionally or physically handicapped.
4. Emergency residential care for four young children in times of family crisis.
5. Informal playgroup during school holidays.

Other services being developed are:

Family day care where minders under supervision and in their own homes care for up to four children during the day.

Before- and after-school care where there is a need.

*Slide 1.* Little Dane, aged two, has just been admitted to a local day nursery. His parents have separated and his mother needs to work. He is sad and bewildered. However, it will not be long before he settles if his needs and those of his family are realised and met. The mothercraft nurse with him will help him cope. The nursery will help his mother cope.

Let us look at the needs of children. Apart from their basic physical needs, which we all know, children need to be wanted, and to be accepted and loved for what they are and not for what they might have been.

They need the security of continuous care; a familiar environment and a stable relationship with adults and other children. They need the opportunity to develop a feeling of self worth; to be able to achieve and to be independent. They need the chance to learn from experience; to take responsibility and to be useful. They also need wise discipline and education.

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* Sister Paine is Sister in Charge of the Children's Centre, North Carlton, Victoria. She illustrated her paper with slides. The slides cannot be reproduced here, but the points at which they were introduced are indicated in the text.

*Slide 2.* This slide of the completed building gives you some idea of what the centre looks like from the outside. The front section is part of an old two-storey Victorian building that the local community insisted be retained to maintain the street-scape. New facilities have been built behind this renovated section. On the same block of land and adjacent to the new building is a long-established and well-equipped kindergarten.

When I was appointed as Sister in Charge of this centre, I hoped to be able to develop a secure and happy place for children, where they could spend a long day away from their home and parents. I wanted to use to advantage the wide range of inter-related services available, because so often programmes become so inflexible that parents have had to make the choice between full day care for five days a week or no supporting service at all.

Quality care depends on recognising the individual needs of children and parents, and having a service adaptable enough to meet those needs.

*Slide 3.* The lay-out of the centre is demonstrated by this plan. Note the area for full day care. The residential unit is on the first floor. The centre has one entrance and a common playground. This helps to foster the concept that children who come to it are not segregated into "kinder kids" and "day nursery kids" but rather it is a children's centre and they can come to stay for varying lengths of time according to their needs and the needs of their parents. Good communication between kindergarten and day-care staff is essential to make this concept work. Smaller members of the centre must not be allowed to disrupt planned programmes for children attending kindergarten. The positive things that come from a common playground far outweigh any problems the staff might fear.

*Slide 4.* For instance, it is good to see three- and four-year-olds coping with toddlers. This is frequently and naturally demonstrated in the common playground.

The Children's Centre has a special unit for children who have handicaps of a physical, intellectual or emotional nature. Parents who look after their handicapped children at home need some relief from the constant strain of caring for them. They need an opportunity to talk about their children and the management problems they encounter. It is a great help to parents to see their children accepted, to see them make progress and develop social skills and to discover that someone really cares.

These points are well illustrated by Memo, aged 4, a little Down's Syndrome (or Mongol) boy from a warm Italian family. Memo is well settled and happy at the Centre.

*Slide 5.* Memo's play-mate is Stephen, aged three and a half years, with brain damage since birth. Stephen was fearful and fretful about leaving his mother. He cried and was distressed each morning until he discovered a friend in Memo.

*Slide 6.* Memo and Stephen now engage in all sorts of happy activities together. I was explaining to Memo's mum what a great help he had been to Stephen. Her tears flowed as the sobbed, "Sister, I didn't ever think I would hear anyone say that Memo could help another child."

Children in the special group are encouraged to realise whatever potential they have and to achieve as much independence as possible. Some of their delay is often due to lack of stimulation and over-protection at home. All the handicapped children are involved with normal active children.

The self-contained emergency residential unit is on the first floor. A young husband and wife team are the cottage parents. Wendy has had child-care experience. Adrian is one of a large family. Even in the short time that this unit has been open, these two young people have done the most sensitive, caring work with children under stress.

*Slide 7.* The mother of these children was urgently admitted for psychiatric help. Wendy and Adrian kept this family together and allowed Maryanne, who is fifteen years old, to continue her mothering role with her four-year-old brother Leon. During the day the younger children like Leon join in the centre activities or attend their own local kindergarten. The older children continue to attend school.

A central storage room where the main equipment is arranged and catalogued has led to a greater choice and a much wider use of equipment throughout the centre. Programmes are planned around children's needs and developmental progress. It has done away with the inevitable possessive attitudes that develop with staff members towards equipment that happens to be in their room.

In the centre there are five family groups of eight to ten children aged from a few months to five years. Two staff members look after a family group. Each group has its own home. One little two-year-old boy trembled with excitement as he told me he had two babies in his home. He was referring to his family group.

Children start arriving at the centre at 7.30 a.m. They go to their family group homes and play there until 9 a.m. They then move into their appropriate educational groups. The four- to five-year-olds who will be going to school next year go across to kindergarten just as they would from their own homes. For example, Samantha, who is four, is taken across to kinder by Carol, her day mother. At kinder home time one day recently, she ran to Carol saying, "You know that big girl? She pulled my hair and bit me", just as if Carol had been her real mum.

The three- to four-year-olds make another group; likewise the two- to three-year-olds, the one- to two-year-olds and the babies.

*Slide 8.* At lunch-time family group members come together again for eating and sleeping. Jamie, aged three and a half years, is taking his little sister back to their family group.

The afternoon is occupied with uninstructed family play.

*Slide 9.* Children are more secure in this setting. Brothers and sisters are able to spend most of the day together. Younger children can imitate and identify with those who have mastered more. The older children have the opportunity to be protective or maternal to smaller children. Parents, too, seem happier about this more natural grouping of children.

Both in the day-care and residential part of the building we have endeavoured to be more flexible and homelike in our approach. Drapes, cushions, brightly coloured bean bags, floor rugs and bright upholstered chairs detract from any institutionalised appearance of the building.

The children's room upstairs has been furnished with a folding cot, a trundle bed that can fit neatly under another bed of the same size, and a comfortable, bright upholstered divan. This has minimised any dormitory-like appearance. It also allows for a greater flexibility in our service.

These things are important physical considerations, but the quality of care and the attitudes of staff are the most important factors.

Parents seeking full day care need to be carefully handled to preserve their dignity. They must be treated as equals and not as lesser beings at the mercy of professionals. Mothers must feel that they and their children are accepted and enfolded by day-care staff, and that their children are safe. I find that many mothers feel guilty about leaving their children in the care of others, and they tend to over-compensate with material rewards and inconsistent handling.

Previously, in our day nurseries we had restricted our staff to mothercraft nurses; but at the Children's Centre we wanted to experiment with staff coming from a variety of backgrounds. I was looking for warm, pliable people who could cherish, understand and interact with little children, and could be in tune with parents and workmates. We placed an advertisement in the daily papers asking for persons over the age of eighteen years, qualified or experienced in the care of pre-school children. This drew a great response and the final selection was:

- Two old-style mothercraft nurses who had worked with me previously in a council day nursery.
- Five graduates from the child-care course at the Prahran Institute of Technology.
- Two girls who had completed the Social Welfare child-care course.
- Two mature ladies who had reared their own families, one with voluntary experience at Kew cottages and the other with pre-school experience in India.

For fifty children from 0-5 years our staff ratio is one to five, but in the small group of children with handicaps it is one to three.

Staff meetings, which help in the development of a democratic structure, are most important. These are held weekly. Where possible the cook and cottage parents attend these meetings. They are held during the rest period in the entrance hall, which has a good view of all rooms. Staff need constant support so that the quality of individualised care can be reinforced.

In a large centre, routines and regulations are necessary. It is an important role of the person in charge to see that these routines do not take over. Feeding, toileting and rest periods can so easily fall into a monotonous routine, which minimises individuality and promotes authoritarian relationships that both staff and parents accept as inevitable.

Communication and honest discussion between staff members and parents are essential to develop an integrated and whole service.

# The Greek Migrant, his Family and his Child-Care Needs

By KEVIN C. ZERVOS*

I HAVE PREPARED this discussion paper not as a migrant, but as an Australian-born person of Greek parents. My knowledge is drawn from my own upbringing and from experiences with many Greek families in the Richmond area.

The migrant arrives in Australia usually with very little money. He is either accommodated at his guarantor's house, or a hostel, or shares a house with a friend. His first job is usually with people he is familiar with. At work his workmates are usually Greek. At home his neighbours are Greek. His local milk-bar owner is also probably Greek. So, in the first years of residence, the Greek migrant is fairly well isolated from his Australian community. After a family has saved enough for a deposit, they move into a home of their own. They sign contracts they cannot understand, mediated by friends who are not that much more knowledgeable, or their children who have learnt to speak English at school. It does not take long for the recent arrival to realise that the Great Australian Dream of owning a home and a car necessitates working longer hours in his unskilled position.

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* Mr Zervos represented the Australian Greek Welfare Society, Melbourne.

The migrant's reaction to the Australian community is not good. He faces discrimination, exploitation, intolerance and is ignored by his employers, government, schools, business people and the general public. The migrant learns bitterly from his experiences. Nearly every Greek we talked to holds a grudge against the Australian society for something that has befallen him in the past. Grudges should not be held, we know, but the migrant sees it this way. If you were to shake the hands of ten people and you knew one of these ten people was going to punch you in the face, you would feel very wary to shake any of those hands. The same with the migrant; if he is willing to be involved with his Australian society and he gets punched in the face, even though it may happen only occasionally, he is wary to be involved in the future. It is much easier for the migrant to forget about Australian society and rely wholly on Greek workmates, Greek friends and relations, and Greek business. So he becomes isolated from Australian society.

Of the Greek migrants who come to Australia, around 55 per cent are illiterate or semi-literate in their own language. Many have never been to primary school, let alone high school. There is very little incentive for the migrant to learn English. Firstly, the long hours that he works mean he comes home tired. Secondly, he can survive without knowledge of the English language. Thirdly, the lack of formal education in his own language means that learning English requires not only the learning of the spoken language but also learning to write—something which he may have never done before.

In general, the migrant adopts the attitude that his success in this country is limited to unskilled labour. So why does the migrant stay in Australia? Although he realises he cannot succeed, he also realises that this country has more of a future than his motherland. He realises that his children will have the opportunities that he missed out on.

## THE GREEK MIGRANT AND HIS FAMILY

Traditionally, the Greek family is very close-knit. The father is the bread-winner and the mother is the housewife. In Australia these traditional roles have been modified. Usually both husband and wife work, and the wife gets lumbered with her traditional role of mother and housekeeper as well. Unfortunately, Greek women have not heard about Women's Lib, and neither have the men. Family planning or contraception is unknown to migrant families. They are unfamiliar with it, and cannot comprehend it in terms of their own upbringing. There are no unwanted children; each child is greeted with joy. A boy child is more joyously greeted, because, when he gets older and marries, he could receive a sizeable dowry. A girl is not as joyously greeted; this means that the family will have to give a dowry when she marries. A boy will carry on the family name—an important consideration to the Greek migrant.

With the joyous arrival of a child, there are problems of course. Being heavily committed with house payments, the loss of one partner's salary is not welcomed. When the infant has grown sufficiently, child care is usually sought. There are several ways in which the Greek family copes with this problem at present.

(1) By far the most common practice is for husband and wife to work alternate shifts. This means that someone is home to take care of baby all day. However, husband and wife do not see each other until the week-end, and the child rarely sees mother and father together. Hardly a healthy family situation.

(2) The second most common method appears to be the "private illegal" child-care facilities provided by women who mind anything up to fifteen children per day at charges as high as $20 per week. We have had reports that children are not adequately fed, not changed regularly, often "doped up" to keep them quiet. When mothers complain, the proprietress usually says they can lump it or leave it.

(3) Grandparents have been brought out to care for children in the home while the parents work. This is fine, but when the children get older, the grandparents are usually not needed. Grandparents have less chance to learn English than the parents and they remain well isolated from the Australian community. They find it difficult to work, and are usually unable to cope with this country if rejected by their own families.

(4) Many parents have sent children to grandparents in Greece. The children stay until they are of school age and then they return to their parents. Separation from their parents for such a long time would have a great effect on the child's development.

(5) Kindergartens are generally not the answer, only caring for 4-5-years age-group and only for morning or afternoon sessions. It is not really an adequate means of child-care. Kindergartens only serve the mother who is not working.

(6) Child-care centres. At the moment child care facilities are very poor. In Richmond there are only 160-odd places in kindergartens and child-care centres to service a population of 28,000. Apart from this, parents do not know about such facilities, and if they do, they look upon them rarely. They work on the principle, "the evil you know is better than the evil you don't know".

Many Greek parents look upon child-care centres with suspicion. The atmosphere is completely strange to them. There is usually no one with whom they can converse in their own language. Staff in the child-care centres are usually English-speaking. Greeks are wary enough of institutions as it is, not knowing much about them and being unable to communicate. They are even more wary of child-care centres where they leave their children to the care of strangers whom they cannot even communicate with. Most parents would prefer to leave their children with unqualified, untrained Greek women, whom they can talk to, rather than leave their children at child-care centres.

Even if parents did not have this fear, they would probably be unable to handle the complicated procedures of being placed on a waiting list, enrolling the child, etc.

Mothers have also told me that they fear, because their children also speak Greek, that they will not be able to communicate with child-care centre staff; for example, if the child was feeling ill, or if the child wanted a glass of water, or if the child wanted to go to the toilet.

As many Greek mothers are factory workers working morning shift, they usually have to be at work by 7.30 a.m. They return at about 4 p.m. Hours of operation of existing child-care centres are usually 9 to 5. These hours are usually not suitable to the working Greek mum.

## WHAT ARE THE CHILD-CARE NEEDS OF GREEK FAMILIES?

In Richmond a group of Greek parents have banded together to operate a child-care centre. At a public meeting of fifty or sixty parents many things were resolved. The resolutions reflected the type of child-care these parents wanted.

The resolutions were:

(1) That all staff at the centre be bilingual. This would allow parent-staff and child-staff communication. This would also allow the child, who until that time, had been raised in a wholly Greek-speaking environment, to be introduced gradually to a bilingual environment. This, obviously, would make the eventual transition from home to school less traumatic.

(2) That the centre's hours of operation be determined to suit the people using the centre. A 6 a.m. start and a 6 p.m. finish has been suggested.

(3) That the menu for breakfast and lunch be decided by qualified persons in conjunction with parents so that the food is nutritional as well as traditional.

(4) That doctors and nurses make regular visits to the centre so that the child's physical welfare is also considered.

(5) That the centre should cater not only for Greek children. There was a suggestion that staff other than Greek and English-speaking may be required if other ethnic groups start using the centre.

These are the ways the Greek families cope with bringing up pre-school-age children. When the children get to school that's another matter. From an early age the child is given many responsibilities. He holds the key to the house, often spending several hours alone until his parents return. He attends Greek school at nights. Parents do not want the child to forget the Greek language. He becomes the translator for the family, negotiating in business transactions, government affairs and filling in tax returns and any other forms. Although the Greek parents have considered their own chance of success through education is non-existent, they impress upon the child, most times forcibly, the importance of an education in Australia.

It is the father who takes the responsibility for the education of children. He takes pride in his child's progress. At almost every home I have visited, the father proudly displays his child's report cards. The parents' future is in the hands of their children's success at school. But they cannot help their child at home with his school studies. He becomes an independent scholar from a very early age, deciding which course to take, with very little direction from the parents. His parents want him to be a doctor or a lawyer, since these are highly-paid positions, but, most of all, respected positions in the community. I sometimes think that the eagerness of the Greek parent to force his child to do well at school reflects an attempt to regain some pride that has been lost. The position the child will eventually hold in the community will help to elevate the parents as well, and gain them respect which they never had. The child will eventually hurt them also, because in his education he learns to question certain traditional values which his parents have maintained.

So much for the child's education. At home the parents educate their children in their own way. Boys are very quickly taught their traditional roles. The girl's education is centred around the sewing-machine, kitchen and the ironing-board. Not only are they taught their traditional roles, but also they are told to be wary of Australians. Australian friends are discouraged. Parents "drum in" to kids, very early in life, that they should take Greek partners when they marry if the wedding is not arranged without any choice of partner.

The children are taught moral ethics: one set for the boys and another for the girls. Boys, once they reach the appropriate age, are encouraged to have an active social life. Girls are kept at home or allowed out chaperoned by an older brother. A Greek girl is taught to be a virgin until she gets married—and that is about the extent of her sex education.

The children, of course, have different moral codes and roles. Being educated in the Australian system, they develop their own weird concoction of the two widely differing cultures. The compromises are not easily comprehended by the parents, who stick rigidly to the traditions and customs of their fathers.

# Training for Day Care

By PATRICIA REYNOLDS*

PRIOR TO 1971 there was no training specifically designed for the care of young children in day-care centres or child-minding centres.

The Sydney Nursery School Training College had been training a small number of teachers for some years, but due to salary differences, many of these went into pre-school and infant education rather than into day care. Sources for professional personnel were from the teaching and nursing professions, and in 1965 legislation in Victoria and later the Commonwealth (Child Care Act, 1972) reinforced this tradition. In Victoria, in our State-subsidised nurseries, the matron has almost always been a nurse, only two centres (prior to 1976) having a kindergarten teacher as director and both of these cared for children aged 3+. In our private child-minding centres, the situation was completely different, with many centres being directed and staffed by staff without formal qualifications.

The majority of the work-force in nurseries and child-care centres was untrained; however, in some States mothercraft nurses, pre-school mothercraft nurses, child-care workers and others have been employed as group leaders under the guidance of the professional director. The situation in relation to professional staffing has remained static; however, the position in relation to para-professional staff has changed considerably.

*Table I*

AVAILABILITY OF COURSES PRIOR TO 1971

| | |
|---|---|
| PROFESSIONAL LEVEL | |
| Teachers early childhood educators | 3-8 years |
| Nurses: general hospital training | |
| maternity hospital training | |
| infant welfare training | |
| PARAPROFESSIONAL LEVEL | |
| Registration in Mothercraft Nursing | 15 months |
| BASIC VOCATIONAL LEVEL | |
| In-service (Private Ctrs.) | W.A. |
| Kindercraft Assts. Cert. | Qld. |

*Table II A*

1976 PROGRAMMES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| W.A.—COMMENCED 1971 | | | |
| Pre-school Education Board | | | |
| Child Care Certificate | F.T. | 100 | 2y. |
| Extension course (Pilot) | | 24 | 2y. |
| Bunbury T.C. | | | |
| Kalgoorlie T.C. | | | |
| Basic Child Care Course (Pilot) | | 10 | 1y. |
| Community Welfare | | | |
| Child-Care Attendant Course | P.T. | | 1y. |

In 1971 Mrs. Pat Keillor and the Pre-school Education Board commenced the Child Care Certificate Course in Western Australia. Until 1976 this was the only such pre-school group, to my knowledge, which endeavoured to meet the needs of parents and children for the diversification of services in child care. The Triple-C's course was designed on the N.N.E.B. model and graduates were primarily intended for the day-care field. In November, 1974, I had the opportunity to see some of these graduates working in centres—one was running two private centres and one was an assistant in Dr. Little's demonstration unit at the University of W.A.

*Table II B*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| VIC.—COMMENCED 1974 | | | |
| Prahran C.A.E. (T.A.F.E. Div.) | | | |
| Certificate of Applied Social Sciences (Child Care Studies) | F.T. | 115 | 2y. |
| Tech. Ed. Div. c. 1976 | | | |
| Footscray T.C. | | 20 | |
| Gordon T.C. | | 20 | |
| Preston T.C. | | 20 | |
| Mothercraft Nurse Certificate. Reg. 1958 | | | |
| V.N.C. | | 120 | 15m |
| P.C.A.E. | | | |
| Child Care Aide Certicate | P.T. | 40 | 1y. |

In February, 1974, we commenced two courses at Prahran C.A.E.—one C.A.S.S. (C.C.S.) and Child Care Aide Certificate. In 1970-71 I had been employed by the Victorian Nursing Council to conduct research into mothercraft training and to revise the curriculum. The revised curriculum was submitted in January, 1971, but unfortunately, life being what it is, two and half years later, when I left the V.N.C. to initiate the course at Prahran C.A.E., the revised mothercraft course had only been approved but not implemented. I am very grateful to the Principal, Prahran C.A.E., and later the Acting Director of Technical Education and the State Council for Technical Education, for having provided the opportunity for the development of the two courses. If these opportunities had not been provided, I wonder when we would have had a suitable course developed in Victoria.

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* Mrs Reynolds is Head of Child Care Studies, Prahran College of Advanced Education, Victoria.

Since that time, courses have sprung up on a nation-wide basis, and I believe those of us who have had the excitement of participating in these developments are very glad to have been a part of it. Scarcely a month went by in 1974-5 when we did not have interstate visitors who were interested in setting up similar courses. Altruism, however, was not the only reason colleges are looking toward diversification of enrolments and there was a body in Canberra, the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission, which appeared to have the money to fund courses. During the 1974-6 period, a number of initiatives were taken in training for day care which we believe will improve the quality of care and better serve the needs of parents and their young children. The current position of courses is illustrated in Tables II A to II F.

*Table II C*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N.S.W.—COMMENCED 1975 | | |
| Dept. Tech. & Further Education | | |
| Child Care Cert. | | |
| N. Sydney Tech. College | 34 | F.T. |
| " " " | 35 | P.T. Stage 1 |
| " " " | 25 | P.T. Stage 2 |
| Bankstown T.C. | 34 | |
| St. George T.C. | 24 | |
| Penrith T.C. | 16 | F.T. |
| | 22 | P.T. Stage 1 |
| Newcastle T.C. | 18 | F.T. |
| | 26 | P.T. Stage 1 |
| A.C.T. | | |
| Canberra T.C. | | |
| Child Care Certificate | 31 | F.T. |

*Table II D*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| QLD. | | |
| Kindergarten Association | | |
| Kindercraft c. 1947 (Rev. 1974) | 20 | 1y. |
| Kangaroo Point T.C. c. 1975 | | |
| Child Care Practice | P.T. 20 | 2y. |

*Table II E*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| S.A. | | |
| Dept. of Further Education | | |
| Cert. in Child Care Studies | | |
| Croydon Park T.C. | 20 ? 40 | 2y. |
| Elizabeth T.C. | ? 40 | 2y. |

*Table II F*

| | |
|---|---|
| TAS. | |
| T.A.F.E. Div. Education Dept. | |
| Child Care Studies Cert. | |
| Hobart c. June 76 | F.T. 20 |
| | P.T. 20 |
| Devonport | 15 – 20 |

*Table III*

DEMAND FOR ENTRY TO COURSES

| Victoria | Inquiries | Applications | Enrolment |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1973 | 400 | 200 | 36 |
| 1974 | 1000 | 600 | 90 |
| 1975 | 600 | 400 | 42* |

*60 additional students enrolled at Footscray, Gordon, Preston Technical Colleges.

## DEMAND FOR COURSES

I am unfamiliar with the demand of persons wishing to enter the child-care field on an Australia-wide basis; however, Table III demonstrates the trend in Victoria. We could fill many more student places than we are able to provide or, alternatively, the courses could be expanded to a number of other colleges. However, there are constraints operating which I believe each course director or co-ordinator needs to bear in mind and to take responsibility for:

1. *Employability of graduates.* Has the market-place reached saturation point? Will it be saturated in two years time when your new students are graduating?

   In Victoria, as in other States, there is a dearth of suitably qualified staff — new centres which opened this year have had troubles recruiting suitable staff; established centres, too, have had their staffing problems. At the same time, the private sector has very few trained personnel working in it and this does not appear to be changing.

   Only thirty-two graduated from P.C.A.E. in 1975. From September onwards we received eighty offers of positions for them and since February we have had many telephone calls seeking graduates—such is the demand from the public child-care sector. It is to be hoped that the private sector, also, will discover the advantage of employing suitably qualified personnel.

2. *Availability of practical field placements.* Those of you who are training students for work in day care will be aware of the variability of standards—a piece of paper does not necessarily imply quality in the delivery of care. In the Prahran course students must be supervised by qualified personnel; therefore the majority of private centres cannot be used for training purposes. This puts considerable strain on those centres with qualified staff and we are grateful for the nursing sisters, kindergarten teachers, mothercraft nurses, pre-school play-leaders and child-care officers who willingly give time and effort to assist in training our students. At present we are using over 150 agencies involving probably 400 qualified personnel and are involved with thirty other agencies which are sending employees to P.A.C.E. for the Child Care Aide Certificate course.

3. *Availability of suitably qualified teachers.* The content of the child-care courses has brought additional professions into the teaching profession at the post-secondary level—infant welfare nurses, kindergarten teachers, psychology graduates with special studies in early childhood development, creative artists, social/behavioural scientists. In Victoria we have regulations requiring registration of teachers and this is based on a course in teacher education; thus any recruits to Child Care Studies teaching have to undergo teaching training. This places financial and administrative stress on technical colleges conducting courses. Over the last three years, under what could be called a "trial under fire", we have discovered our strengths and weaknesses—one or other professional group may hand over, for example, Early Childhood Development to another group with more specialist knowledge or a team comprising teachers from a variety of disciplines may team-teach a particular subject

Another problem is the high kindergarten-teacher award which may exclude some kindergarten teachers seeking positions in technical colleges. Only the dedicated will accept what appears to be a decrease in award status for what is a great increase in work responsibility. Kindergarten teachers have a background difficult to equivaluate with technical teaching requirements—we [illegible] use kindergarten teaching experience as industrial experience, their three-year diploma as content area.

*Table IV*

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF STUDENTS

1. Application form: personal and educational details
2. Reading vocabulary and comprehension test
3. Essay: a. English expression
   b. Attitudes to children
4. One week's practical work in a day child-care centre—not a kindergarten
5. Interview by selection panel
6. Satisfactory health certificate
7. Victorian School Leaving Certificate (if entering straight from school).

Owing to the high demand for entry to the course, we can be selective. Due to the nature of the role the graduate plays in the child-care field, it is important that the students selected:

1. have a warm personality;
2. have a reasonable chance of completing the course successfully;
3. have a vocation for the child care field;
4. are healthy physically and emotionally;
5. demonstrate a concern for children and adults.

*Table V*

ENROLMENTS OF STUDENTS
Prahran C.A.E.
Certificate of Applied Social Science
Child Care Studies '74 - '76

| Enrolments | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Actual number commencing | 36 | 75 | 41 |
| Female school leavers | 23 | 48 | 12* |
| 17 - 25 | 13 | 20 | 24 |
| 26 - 35 | — | 3 | 2 |
| 36 - 45 | — | 3 | — |
| Male school leavers | — | — | 2* |
| Others | — | 1 | 1 |

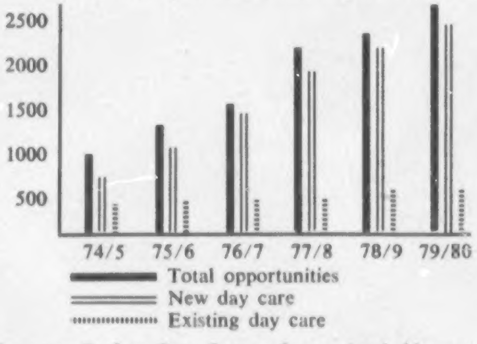
Table V demonstrates the changes that have taken place over the last three years in enrolment of students. We provide opportunities for Child Care Aides who have demonstrated outstanding ability to enter the course—three have entered in 1976. Some of our students were young and not-so-young assistants in kindergartens or day nurseries with whom we come into contact on our supervisory visits.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Evidently problems have arisen in some States in relation to opportunities for graduates in the child-care area. I would like to show you some figures which I believe indicate, at least in Victoria, that there will be opportunities for some time for Prahran-type graduates (Table VI).

*Table VI*

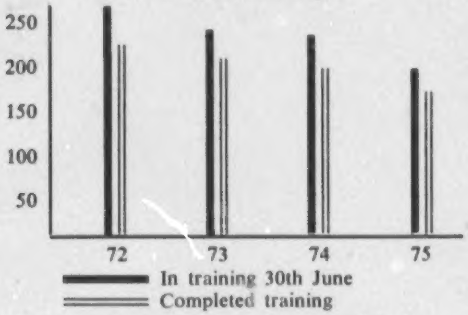
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Projections: Project Child Care Report 1974



These are Project Care Report figures (probably out of date), but I believe they indicate that we have in no way progressed sufficiently to meet requirements. In Victoria there are over 200 private child care/minding centres, the majority of which do not employ qualified staff. I believe that future legislation relating to these centres should include regulations pertaining to staff qualifications; in the meantime, some encouragement could be given to these centres to employ suitably qualified staff.

*Table VII*

VICTORIA—MOTHERCRAFT NURSING STATS.
1975 V.N.C. Annual Report



i.e. although need is increasing, number of graduates has been decreasing.

Table VII indicates that, although known requirements have been rising, i.e. new centres have been built, fewer persons are being trained. (I would like to point out that I do not regard the present institutional training of mothercraft nurses as suitable preparation for day-care employment and it is hoped that as soon as the technical colleges are training enough staff these institutions will close down. One closed last year and one is closing this year.)

*Table VIII*

EMPLOYMENT OF GRADUATES

| | |
|---|---|
| W.A. | Pre-school Education Centres |
| | Day Care Centres |
| | Residential Centres |
| | Private families |
| VIC. | Day Care Centres |
| | Residential Centres |
| | Pre-school Play Centres |
| | Maternity Hospitals |
| | Children's Wards |
| | Private Families |

This table shows areas of employment of our and W.A. graduates. Since speaking to Mrs. Keillor, I believe my information relating to W.A. is probably in error.

*Table IX*

Of 32 graduates from Prahran C.A.E., 1975:
16 are in Day Care
3 are in Residential Care
6 are in Pre-school Play Centres
2 are in Maternity Hospitals
1 is doing further study
4 Unknown

Table IX shows where our 1975 graduates are actually working. We received eighty offers of positions for our thirty-two graduates last year and have received many requests since which we have been unable to meet. We are already receiving requests from agencies to put up employment notices for 1976 graduates. 1975 graduates were able to be very discriminatory in their selection of employment, and, of course, because of the nature of their training, they have a broad knowledge of the employment opportunities available.

## DESCRIPTION OF COURSES

Although the courses have developed relatively independently, they have in the main developed from a Pacific version of the Nursery Nurse course and in some ways they resemble the C.D.A. courses in California.

Probably because of the much later development, some Australian courses have included more general education based on the humanities, social and behavioural sciences and creative arts. This is especially true of those in the T.A.F.E. area. Secondly, research into technical and further education in Europe has indicated that persons in training need to have a broad general education, as this enables them, in a time of rapid social and technological change, to accept changes to and adapt their techniques more readily to changing needs.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF COURSES

Three areas of study/development are integrated throughout the course:

1. Theoretical vocational studies in child development mothercraft/parentcraft; health education; children's activities and programmes.
2. Practical work experience: day child-care centres; kindergartens; pre-school play centres; residential child-care centres; maternity hospitals.
3. Personal development in Humanities; Social/Beh. Sci., creative arts.

*Table X*

COMPARISON OF THREE COURSES
C.C.C.— Child Care Certificate, W.A.
C.A.S.S.—Cert. of App. Soc. Sci., Vic.
C.C.S.—Cert. in Child Care Studies, S.A.

| | C.C.C. | C.A.S.S. | C.C.S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Child Development | 254 | 256 | 480 |
| Activities and Programmes | 148 | 192 | |
| Health Education | 104 | — | 160 |
| Mothercraft | — | 256 | — |
| Personal Development Education | 195 | 384 | 240 |
| Supervised Work Experience | 1522 | 1248 | 800 |
| TOTAL | 2223 | 2286 | 1920 |

Prahran C.A.E. 32-wk. yr.
W.A. and S.A. 40-wk. yr.

Table X indicates the similarity of the courses as they exist in three States.

In the Prahran C.A.E. course, Mothercraft stresses care of the neonate and its mother, the young infant and toddler as well as the 2-6-year-old child. Students spend considerable time in learning nutrition, including practical preparation of infant feedings and toddlers' meals. Prahran C.A.E. general education area includes elective units such as Puppetry, Music and Movement, Children and the Electric Media, Children's Literature and Story-Telling, Behavioural Studies, Social Relationships, which will enhance their contribution in their interaction with children and their parents.

### RECOGNITION OF C.A.S.S. (CCS)

Our graduates receive registration in the branch of mothercraft nursing as pre-school mothercraft nurses (a traditional title). Thus they have portability of qualification across State and national boundaries. It was believed essential, as an insurance policy if you like, that we sought registration. However, I do not believe that Nurses' Boards are necessarily the organisations which should have control over child-care personnel. In this State we presently have three awards: mothercraft nursing; child care workers; hospital and benevolent homes award.

Some untrained assistants are paid under child-care workers' award and gain a similar salary to R.M.N.'s. In other centres (i.e. the private centres), untrained assistants are paid under the H. and B.H. Award. Other anomalies exist at professional level —kindergarten teachers/nurses. Some of the clauses of these awards cause friction — the preparation sessions, the holiday-leave allowances for kindergarten teachers, which others working in day care do not receive. How do we resolve these situations? I believe that until child care is at least on a similar plane/status to early childhood education, primary and secondary education, then we are not being honest about our philosophy that the first five years of a child's life are the most important years and the other cliché, that our young children are our most valuable resource. If we believe this, then we should be prepared to attract persons with desirable attitudes and, once we have them, then we should be willing to provide education and working conditions that reflect our concern for our children.

### CHILD CARE AIDE CERTIFICATE

This is a one-year in-service course for persons working in private child-minding centres, day nurseries, residential centres, kindergartens and centres for children with special needs.

Students attend college one afternoon and one evening each week:

| | |
|---|---|
| Infant and Child Development | 2 units (64 hours) |
| Mothercraft | 2 units (64 hours) |
| Language and Creative Arts | 2 units (64 hours) |
| Child Study Project | 2 Semester Study |

There is monthly assessment of students in centres by college teachers. There has been a great response from private centres and a number of proprietors are sending, over a period of time, all their employees. Students may be sixteen years or fifty years, and the span has been fairly even. One centre with mature women chosen for their mothering abilities sent its complete staff last year; at the other end of the scale are girls who might otherwise find themselves unemployed at eighteen years due to the rise in wages at that age-level.

The staff is enthusiastic that we should continue our aide course; we believe we can assist these people in thinking about alternative ways of caring for children, on learning how and what to provide for young children, in the importance of optimum care, in developing their own abilities so they gain more enjoyment and confidence in their child-care role. One of the problems, of course, is that there is no award recognition for these people — some proprietors do pay extra money above the award, but other child-care aides do not receive any increment.

### PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE

Proposed programmes for 1977 may not receive the funding required, and this may mean that these initiatives will be postponed or cancelled. Funding for tertiary programmes is conditional on grants from the Australian Commission on Advanced Education and it appears that new initiatives will have to be undertaken within the funding parameters existing at April, 1975. Only where a college needs or believes it is desirable to cut back on enrolments in other courses, therefore, can new courses be initiated.

*Table XI*

PROPOSED COURSES FOR 1977

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Qld. | | |
| | Brisbane K.T.C.<br>2y. | U.G.3 Assoc. Dip. in Child Care<br>P.C. 1977 |
| Vic. | | |
| | Prahran C.A.E. | P.G.1 Dip. in Child Care Admin.<br>1y. L.C. 1977. E.F.T. 20<br>(for prof. staff in C.C. area) |
| | | U.G.2. Dip. in Children's Services<br>3y. L.C. 1977. E.F.T. 20 |
| | S.C.V. Inst. E.C.D. | U.G.3 Ass. Dip. in Child Care<br>2y. + 1y. |
| | | U.G.2 Diploma } in Child Care<br>Degree } Admin.<br>P.C. 1977 E.F.T. 30 |
| | | P.G.1. Dip. in Child Development<br>P.C. 1977<br>(for prof. staff in C.C. area) |

It is evident that the successful development of para-professional courses in child care are now leading to the development of professional level courses. Hopefully this will not lead to the categorising and specialising of personnel, as has happened in the other helping professions.

# Planning the Physical Environment for the Care and Education of Young Children

By ELIZABETH WOOD, Past Lecturer in Early Childhood Education

RECORDS SHOW that as long ago as 1888 there was recognition of the fact that within a school setting very young children needed a particular type of environment, one that varied in certain ways from that which was more suited to their older brothers and sisters. One account of the modifications that were seen as important was given in the *Argus* Supplement[1] of 9 August 1888:

> The kindergarten room . . . is filled with rows of small desks, each intended to accommodate only two children, and the seats, unlike the ordinary forms of the primary school are fitted with rests at the back. Sufficient space is reserved to enable the teacher to pass to and fro, and on the floor there is room enough for the children to march and move about when they grow tired of the inactivity of sitting.

In the early part of this century there was only a handful of kindergartens and creches, the former seemed almost exclusively for children from privileged families, the latter for less privileged children. In describing the creches it was said that they ". . . were purely philanthropic in purpose and offered full day care from 7.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. (1 p.m. on Saturdays) for children under school age who, for the charge of 3d. per day, were washed, fed, and amused."[2]

From the point of view of events which influenced buildings, one rather significant development took place as kindergartens began to be established for less privileged children whose families lived in inner overcrowded suburban areas; for many of these kindergartens were set up in church halls.* And even when the first authentic kindergarten building in Melbourne† was erected hall-like proportions were accepted as quite suited to its institutional requirements. This link between kindergartens and church halls remains evident as there are still kindergartens functioning quite successfully under vaulted roofs and mock-gothic windows, where draughts roar under doors, and opportunities for supervision are often less than ideal. This institutional influence in buildings for small children meant high ceilings, large impersonal spaces, small and often high windows, isolation between indoors and outdoors, where there was little benefit derived from either sun or light in an atmosphere that was cold and imposing. Gradually, as the number of kindergartens grew, changes began to appear, and innovations that catered for young children's needs became more apparent, even though up until the beginning of the Second World War the number of kindergartens was still very small.

One of the things that influenced the types of buildings that were produced prior to the Second World War was the very strong welfare programme that was offered through kindergartens. Not only were children taught, but they were often fed and washed too, and their play was geared to developing good habits and sound health. Many of the children who attended kindergartens during the 1930s came from families who were affected by the depression, which meant that kindergartens were often the source of food, comfort, and support. So the types of buildings that were suited to programmes that catered for such a range of possibilities seemed to fall somewhere between hall, schoolroom, and hospital.

Feeding children, washing them, washing their clothes, collecting clothes for distribution, as well as allowing children time to sleep, and opportunities to play and take part in an organised programme, needed a large and fairly versatile building; certainly one that had many more ramifications than the simple more domestic type of building that we regard as suited to today's needs.

The extraordinary growth in the number of kindergartens in Australia, particularly within this State, began in 1948. Quite by good fortune, or good timing, by that stage certain milestones had been reached in the concept of what constituted suitable buildings to "house" educational programmes for very young children. So, by the time kindergartens began to be built in significant numbers certain basic principles had been accepted, and these were:

1. Inside and outside areas need to be integrated.
2. Buildings need to be light and attractive.
3. Spaces and equipment need to be child-sized.

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* The first kindergarten to be established in Melbourne for under-privileged children was in the Baptist Sunday School in Bouverie Street, Carlton.[3]

† This was the Lady Northcote kindergarten in Montague.[4]

4. The environment as a whole needs to be safe, hygienic, and interesting.[5]

These principles appear to us today to be almost commonplace, and they have certainly provided the basic guide-lines for new buildings for the past thirty years. Certainly it was not just by chance nor by waving the wand that these basic principles were first formulated. It was during the establishment of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres that these standards were conceived. This landmark was reached in the year 1940, for at that time plans to establish the Lady Gowrie Child Centres came into fruition. The six centres (one in each capital city) were designed from the same basic plan, but in each State variations and adaptations were made so that the buildings would be suitable to local conditions and climate, and so that the various sites would be used to the best advantage. Marcus Martin was the architect who designed the Lady Gowrie Centres, and in a foreword to the book *Pre-School Centres in Australia*[6], he said:

> With the introduction of group education for the pre-school child, new problems in planning and equipment have to be considered.
>
> Usual standards accepted for schools will not apply in the case of the pre-school; and these are the outcome of many years of study and practical experience of highly trained personnel.
>
> The plan should be essentially functional in character, the conception of which should result in a building with a definite appeal, for the psychological effect on the child mind by immediate surroundings is far reaching.

In a paper in an *Australian Pre-School Quarterly* of 1955, Gladys Pendred[7] claimed that the principle of unity between playroom and playground was demonstrated by the Lady Gowrie Child Centres, with the playroom opening directly on to the playground through large sliding doors. She continued:

> This principle in planning has been universally accepted and whatever the overall design of a new kindergarten may be, one can expect to find anywhere in Australia that the playroom will open on to the playground and that the building will be sited to facilitate supervision of both areas for play.

At the annual meeting of the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria of 1942-43 the annual report created another milestone in the development of kindergartens. One of the statements that was made had particular bearing on the development of kindergarten buildings, as it was concerned with expressing a specific statement of standards acceptable or necessary in the establishment of kindergartens. This statement listed particular requirements in relation to site, aspect, playroom, bathroom, playground, and other rooms such as kitchens and storerooms. It also discussed the adaptation of old buildings, the provision of play equipment and suitable furniture. The emphasis was on providing equipment which would promote large muscle and general physical development. Chairs and tables should be designed, the report added, bearing in mind the posture of the child, as well as enabling him to become independent in the use of these things.

As well as emphasising children's physical development as a major determining factor in the choice of equipment, the report said:

> Much other equipment designed to give scope for sensory experience, powers of discrimination, dramatic and creative ability must be included if the child is to have real opportunity to learn through play.[8]

I would claim that much of what has been achieved in the buildings that house our pre-school services stems from this work that was done in establishing the Lady Gowrie Child Centres, and, particularly in Victoria, from the statements made in the Free Kindergarten Union annual report 1942-43 which ultimately grew into *Standards for the Establishment and Maintenance of Nursery Kindergartens*, and, *Pre-School Centres Building Regulations* which were brought out by the Department of Health in Victoria in 1951. The requirements of pre-school centres being built today are still regulated by these two documents, although many modifications have been made to the 1951 editions.

There are two reasons why I have gone into this brief historical survey. *Firstly*, to show that development of kindergarten buildings and equipment, and the standards that were formulated in relation to them, resulted from careful assessment and planning, with particular emphasis being given to children's health, welfare, and learning. *Secondly*, to ask should kindergarten buildings have shown more significant development during the past thirty years since these standards were first formulated?

And, to this question I must answer "Yes", for a number of reasons:

1. Our knowledge of child development, of behaviour, and of how children learn has grown considerably since the 1940s, and therefore, we should have greater knowledge to draw on when planning kindergarten programmes and the buildings that complement them. I believe that kindergarten programmes *have* kept pace with increases in knowledge, but that the ways we have planned the environment in which these programmes are to take place have remained strangely dormant.
2. Ramifications of society are far more complex than they were thirty years ago, with greater variations in styles of living, and with people from many different cultures making their homes in Australia. Also, many more children from a wide range of backgrounds are attend-

ing kindergartens than was the case thirty years ago.

3. Economic conditions have altered considerably in the past thirty years, and this means that buildings that are expensive to construct and to maintain need to be planned with awareness for the diversity of uses to which the buildings could be put: for example, by children after school, by adult groups at night, and by family groups or youth groups during the weekends. In the past the main objection to kindergartens being used out of hours was because it gave teachers far more work in preparing the building for use by other groups, and then setting it up again in the morning for kindergarten use. This was the fault of the building. And surely, with advances in design and construction, buildings could be made to be functional for a wider variety of groups without adding extra problems to those working in them?

There have been developments within certain aspects of the kindergarten environment, of course. With the development of new materials and building techniques, new designs and more adventurous landscaping have been possible, and new materials have added to the variety of equipment. This has meant that maintenance has been made easier for teachers through more resilient materials, or through synthetic materials being used. Two of the materials that have been adopted rather too enthusiastically, though, are Laminex, and treated pine-logs. Laminex is a hard and unattractive material as well as having a surface that is both slippery and reflecting. This makes it unsuitable for use in buildings that are light, and that are open to currents of air, and basically because it is so much less sympathetic in texture to its users than more natural materials like wood. Pine-logs are now so much part of our environment that I wonder what values they have that have made them so widely adopted. The equipment made from pine logs is usually fairly structured, fairly unmoveable, and fairly characterless. Also, from the point of view of the physical capabilities of pre-school children, the diameter of the logs is too large for easy use by these chlidren who need smaller rungs to hold on to and to climb up.

Another development in physical environments for pre-school children is the realisation that small, quiet areas are needed that can be shut off from the noisier, larger playrooms. These smaller, quiet rooms are seen as necessary areas where work with individuals, with small groups, or where special projects can be carried out. Teachers have voiced the need for such rooms, and have made it clear that such areas need easy access from the main playrooms and playgrounds, as well as having provision for adequate supervision from one area to another. In this case architects and teachers have combined to produce a very significant development in preschool buildings.

One material that has almost vanished during the past few years, which in the past was one of the basic surfaces to be found in kindergartens, is tanbark. There has not been a suitable substitute found for it yet, and from the point of view of both safety and aesthetics, playgrounds have suffered since it became almost totally unavailable. Thus, another dimension becomes apparent in our desire to create the best possible physical environments; certain natural resources are beginning to run out (or are becoming extremely scarce), and suitable substitutes will need to be developed if environments are to remain satisfactory.

In relation to developing physical environments for young children, architects and designers claim that they have difficulty in planning stimulating, imaginative, and innovative buildings because of the inarticulateness of teachers when they are asked to describe their educational aims. As well, designers claim that kindergartens are cluttered and noisy, and that most surfaces are hard and unsympathetic. They consider that teachers seem to be somewhat impervious to their surroundings and that they tend to accentuate the more unattractive elements in their buildings by the way they equip and arrange them.

Thus, in relation to these two points, both architects and designers consider that it would be useless to design really imaginative buildings, where space and texture and line were used more creatively, and which were furnished with basic modular furniture that could be used in many different ways. Such possibilities would be useless, they claim, unless teachers had a real understanding of how to use such buildings and equipment to really good advantage. One of the things that could help, designers believe, would be for teachers to study ergonomics, which by definition[9] is "studying man in relation to his working environment".

Some of the aspects of the environment that need particular consideration are:

1. The use of colour and how it affects children's and adults' responses.
2. Different surfaces that could be used that would be softer and more attractive to children, yet would still be practical and easy to maintain.
3. The effect of space on children's reactions, and how to use various spaces efficiently by creating spaces within spaces, or by pushing boundaries out to create larger areas. Spaces within kindergartens must be flexible, as children of different ages and experiences need different-sized areas to work in; for example three-year-olds need small secure spaces with the close proximity of the other children and the teacher; two-year-olds need an even more scaled down area in which

to feel at ease and secure; whereas most 4½-year-olds are usually requiring more space in which to exercise their more advanced skills and to carry out their more elaborate ideas. Therefore, a building that caters for a wide age-range of children needs to have certain techniques available that can be used to give the illusion of small, secure areas, within the larger overall area, or to allow for more unrestricted use of the total area.

4. The type of order that we establish in kindergartens needs to be considered in relation to whether it is created because of the ease of maintenance and because of adults' reactions to it. One architect[10] claims that adults' constant pre-occupation with order and symmetry seems quite at odds with what children need in an environment. Children want the sort of order that suits them, that they can adapt and recreate, and this usually conflicts with the ways adults organise the environment. This type of order applies particularly to playgrounds where maintenance is a constant concern, and because of this, children can often be restricted in the way they use them. In the book *Designing Australian Busn Gardens* Maloney and Walker[11] show that they are aware of this sense of order when they say: ". . . the human mind demands order, and because we are all human, we search for beauty through conscious design". But, Lady Allen of Hurtwood[12] says, in relation to playgrounds, that what we should be aiming for ". . . is to enable children to handle malleable materials in their own way".

5. Because buildings, furniture, and equipment are all so expensive, no doubt we are all thinking of ways to cut costs. Providing modular furniture could be one way of doing this, but firstly this would need to be designed and manufactured. Why shouldn't tables be designed so that they could double as cubby houses, or easels, or large blocks with which children could build? And why must expensive supplementary material stay inside for fear of being spoilt when similar objects could be designed that could be used quite safely in sand, water or earth play? And, why can't buildings be climbed on, crawled under, added to, painted on? Most buildings seem just to provide a shelter in which various activities are carried out. I can imagine buildings that were brilliantly designed being used for all sorts of purposes as well as providing shelter.

As you can see from this last statement I am an avant-garde idealist, and a rather inexperienced one at that, certainly from the design point of view. I do, however, have a very keen desire to make physical environments for young children as suitable, stimulating, and natural as possible.

When interviewing an Adelaide architect[13] some years ago, he said: "Every building should be taken from first principles—obviously what you have done before will influence you; but you start from spatial relationships and take each building on its own merits". May I suggest that this is the way for teachers to approach the task of organising the particular physical environments that they are called upon to establish? Each kindergarten environment needs to be examined from first principles at the beginning of each year, and again during the year, not once but many times. Children's growth, rate of development, socialising patterns, responses to learning, and emotional requirements, as well as what it is hoped to teach children should form the basis for deciding how to establish an environment that offers the most to particular children, at particular times, and in particular situations.

Thus, with continual change, development, and growth, the axiom for physical environments for the young must surely be that they remain as basic and as flexible as possible, encouraging a really creative approach to their arrangement and use.

Perhaps Lewis Mumford,[14] one of the chief protagonists in the realm of modern environments, should have the last word. He says: ". . . An environment or a structure that has been reduced to the level of the machine, correct, undeviating, repetitious, monotonous, is hostile to organic reality and to human purpose; even when it performs, with a certain efficiency, a positive function such as providing shelter, it remains a negative symbol, or at best a neutral one".

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# Teachers — Parents — Television

## Passing the Buck: Some responsibilities of Teachers in relation to Children's Television

By ROSEMARY MILNE*

THE PRODUCERS and programmers of television material are not wholly responsible for the effects on young viewers. Early childhood teachers have not contributed much to the pool of knowledge and experience out of which decisions are made. One of the present tasks of teachers is to help clarify some of the questions that need to be asked and answered. Their most important questions may be related to the judgement of quality—what criteria to use. We cannot expect to arrive at one perfect universally approved set of criteria for judging whether any programme is educationally sound, but unless teachers start contributing to the thinking, there will be a grass-roots level missing. Don't pass the buck to the industry nor the academics; at least deal out some thoughtful questions.

### PASSING THE BUCK TO THE INDUSTRY

There is an interesting phrase in the English language —"passing the buck". Do you know its derivation? The buck is the article placed before a player in a poker game whose turn it is to deal. To pass the buck is to shift responsibility to someone else. It is appropriate behaviour, in a game of poker, to pass the buck. It is not appropriate behaviour in this matter before us. The fact that the phrase "passing the buck" has found its way into general use suggests that to shift responsibility to someone else is a common human tendency. Therefore, let us watch out for it in ourselves! Are we, as teachers, sometimes or often inappropriately passing the buck to the television industry in relation to the television viewing of young children in our society? I am not suggesting that the television industry has no responsibilities in this area. I am suggesting that we, as educators, should concentrate first of all on clarifying our own responsibilities. We are the teachers; we are the ones who are entrusted (and paid) by the community for the primary task of the education of its children. This is not the primary task which our society has given to the television field. Education or "enrichment" may or may not be included in the set of responsibilities of those engaged in television, but we are the "experts'" in education. I suggest that it is no wonder if the Australian television industry doesn't seem to be affected much by educational considerations when we teachers have said very little that is worth listening to. What guidelines have we laid down for children's television?

### EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS—WHAT HAVE THEY CONTRIBUTED?

I worked directly in children's television for ten years or so. During that time I very seldom heard a useful original constructive comment on children's television coming from a pre-school teacher in the field. Most teachers don't watch children's television programmes. When they say something about a programme it is usually an isolated, negative remark. They may criticise something about a programme they have happened to see, but they seldom say this in a manner that is useful to producers of that programme. If you think this is too tough, call to mind now any of the relevant communications you know about, relating to television and the education of young children, separate out the studies by psychologists, sociologists, etc., and look at what is left; where are the Australian teachers talking specifically about educational issues in relation to television viewing in early childhood?

I think that pre-school teachers tend to know more about the programmes watched by children which are not specifically made for young children, possibly because these are shown later in the evening when the teachers, too, may be viewing. They recognise elements of these programmes reflected in the children's dramatic play, particularly in aggressive elements of that play, and the negative effects of television viewing are reinforced in teachers' minds. Is it possible that teachers are less conscious of desirable, positive learning effects of children's television viewing, in so far as these may arise out of specific pre-school programmes, because they don't view the programmes, so don't recognise it as readily when children reflect such learning?

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* Mrs Milne is a former kindergarten teacher at present undertaking doctorial research.

## PASSING THE BUCK TO TEACHERS' COLLEGES

Are you thinking: "Well, they didn't teach us about all this in our course"? When I'm wearing my cap as a teacher of teachers I must be willing to face the specific responsibilities and failures of teacher-training institutions in this regard. But it is in no way helpful just to shift responsibilities around. This is not a poker game; it is not just up to one player to deal out the cards whilst the others sit back and wait to see what they are given. No pre-service teacher-training course is ever going to deal out a hand containing all the trumps a teacher will need to hold for her field work. If you think that teachers' colleges can help you more in this area, where are your requests for in-service courses that will help you get on with your responsibilities?

## USEFUL ANSWERS REQUIRE GOOD QUESTIONS

Following this session you will have time for discussion, but how often do you get anything that is of lasting value from this? Why is this so? Most of us come to these groups necessarily unprepared for much serious work on the spot, and there simply isn't time for it anyway. The careful thinking-out of what questions we need to be asking is an essential time-consuming step in arriving at useful answers. Teachers in the field have a unique contribution to make at this stage of research. I would suggest that we consider what questions teachers should be asking, and how they might organise themselves in the future to ask questions, rather than trying to arrive at answers in half an hour or so. Following are some of the questions I think we should be considering.

## QUESTIONS OF QUALITY

How do you judge a good television programme for young children, in educational terms? What are the absolutely necessary conditions such a programme must meet? Are there other conditions that are desirable but not necessary in all cases? What are the criteria by which you would judge a programme educationally poor, undesirable, or destructive? Can these conditions be spelt out clearly? Can teachers come up with guidelines to producers and guidelines to parents?

## QUESTIONS OF QUANTITY

What amount of television material specifically prepared for young children is desirable? What criteria should be used in arriving at an answer? How relevant are average viewing patterns in deciding upon some optimum quantity of programmes for young children? Say we establish that the norm is five hours television viewing per day for children under eight years, does this justify us in asking the station managers or the Broadcasting Control Board to supply five hours of "suitable" programmes? If young children in our community are watching too much television, why is this so? What alternative activities are available to these children? Is it possible that we should be asking for less children's television, not more?

Children (and adults) want novelty, but the viewing audience for television programmes for young children is changing every few years. Maybe we could be producing fewer programmes and concentrating time and talent on very good programmes which stand a lot of repeating. It would be an interesting exercise to go through an existing series of children's programmes, sorting out the poor programmes and the outstanding programmes. Should we be building up a library or even just a list of individual good children's programmes? Who is going to select what to keep?

We could go even further and think about the cult of childhood: are we accepting without any critical thought the cult of childhood—the cult of children's literature, children's playground rhymes, children's fashions, and children's television? Do we need children's programmes as such? Maybe the children are better off watching quality adult material rather than children's programmes.

If school children are watching television for many hours a day, does this mean that stations should timetable programmes suitable for them at almost any hour of the day when they might happen to switch on the set? It is possible to switch off the television set.

## QUESTIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

(a) *The educator's role with parents.* Given that some young children in your educational care watch television every day for a greater amount of time than they spend at kindergarten, is this any responsibility of yours as an educator? If so, what exactly is your responsibility? What do you know about the likely influence of such viewing on early childhood development and learning? What do you need to know that you don't know, in order to discuss problems with parents? Is this information available? Where? Can you discharge your responsibilities in this area by calling in an "expert" to give a talk to the parents?

(b) *Responsibilities regarding censorship.* It may be a slow task to build up quality in children's television programmes. However, it is not difficult to switch off a television set, now. It is the responsibility of adults who are educating and rearing young children to make choices about the control of the stimuli to which the children will be exposed. To choose not to exercise any control over input is one of the possible choices. It is not my choice, but I cannot logically rule it out as a a possible responsible choice at which others may arrive. What I do rule out as totally unacceptable is that we allow the situation of non-control over stimuli to happen by default. That means, in this instance, that young children watch whatever comes simply because no adult will make decisions about it. The early childhood period is the easiest time of all to see that kids don't watch rubbish. The need is for an adult to be aware of what they are viewing, all the time (to watch with them) and to sometimes switch off the set and engage the children in another interesting activity. If parents need help in the techniques of doing this, then I think it is part of our task as teachers to help the parents. Of course, the parents aren't all interested, but are we reaching all those who might be?

(c) *Responsibilities regarding stimulation.* Parents and teachers can't pass the buck to the television industry to stimulate and challenge young children. They must promote enriching activities in all kinds of individual and community ways. Is it part of your job as an educator to help the community provide other avenues for stimulation in early childhood?

## CONCLUSIONS

I have thrown out a lot of questions in this short talk. I believe that early childhood teachers must talk about these things. Further, they must communicate their thoughts to others, particularly to parents and to the television industry. They must say what they are fairly sure about, what they are not sure about, what they consider desirable, what they consider dangerous. Of course their answers and statements will be tentative, subject to change, based on incomplete knowledge. All knowledge suffers from the same limitations. The teachers' answers will be coming from the grass-roots level of education, the down-to-earth, practical, concrete level. The production of highly academic studies on the effects of television on the development of young children is not your responsibility in your role as a teacher in the field (although it may come into the duties of some of your other roles). Teachers in the field must make their voices heard in this area as teachers in the field. Teachers cannot pass the buck to television producers to provide educationally enriching programmes for young children if they cannot produce guidelines to show what *they* consider an educationally enriching programme must and must not contain.

# Some Facts and Fancies about Child Abuse

By Prof. PETER BOSS*

THE MAIN PURPOSE of this paper is to provide an overview of the phenomenon of child abuse. It is intended to present some of the main facts and findings insofar as they have emerged in clinical and empirical work as well as some of the speculations which are enmeshed in such work. Additionally it is the intention to place the topic into a wider socio-cultural context which must inevitably involve some comment on political and economic factors. Perhaps it should be added that, having embarked on such a global approach, this paper cannot do more than act as an introduction to the topic of child abuse. This, however, may serve as a means by which interest is aroused in it and concern shared over a phenomenon which is an embarrassment to any civilised society. This concern has been rekindled over the past decade. The use of the word "rekindled" is deliberate since the literature of the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. has, to my knowledge, not really ceased to cover this topic since the great debates and activities surrounding the formation of societies for the protection of children in both countries toward the close of the last century.[1] More recently however, clinicians, particularly in America, pointed the way to a revival of concern in the causation of non-accidental injuries to young children and equally important, have generated an interest in prevention and generally management of the problem.

It has been the persistent work in particular of C. H. Kempe and his team which since the early sixties has continuously brought the subject of child abuse to our attention and has resulted in considerable research efforts and debate, and at last, large-scale plans for action by public authorities in a number of countries including Australia.

It is also thanks to Kempe[2] that we can apply a definition which indicates the area we are dealing with; child abuse is a situation

> in which a child is suffering from serious physical injury inflicted upon him by other than accidental means; is suffering harm by reason of neglect, malnutrition, or sexual abuse; is going without necessary and basic physical care; or is growing up under conditions which threaten his physical and emotional survival.

This definition covers particular aspects or derivatives of abuse, such as "child or baby battering", "child neglect" or "child cruelty", and serves as a substitute for another widely-used term, "child maltreatment". It begs certain questions about criteria or indices which are to be applied to matters such as the standards to be applied in judging a child to be harmed by neglect, or the conditions that govern physical and emotional survival, and brings into discussion the economic and cultural settings in which children grow up: a point to which I wish to return presently. There may also be some controversy over the age groups that constitute a "child". There is a tendency to focus interest and research on the baby or toddler, less so on the older child. Most of the researches concentrate on those early age groups and the reports from hospitals in particular usually refer to the younger age groups. However, the older age groups are also involved and there is a literature now which covers ages up to eighteen. If the maximum age at which a neglected child may appear before a children's court in Australia is any guide, such age will be seventeen or eighteen, varying between States.[3] It is as well to remember that the older child too is affected, though, to be sure, the very young are the most vulnerable and defenceless.

## WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW —AND DON'T KNOW?

It is sadly true that the amount and in-depth knowledge we have of child abuse in our kind of society is very sparse. Considering the small resources devoted to fact-finding it can hardly be otherwise. I quote what Polansky had to say in his report to the Joint Commission on Mental Health for Children (U.S.A., 1968):

> Our ignorance regarding the problems of child abuse and child neglect is . . . not quite total, but it is severe enough to be inexcusable. We do not know what the incidence nor prevalence of these conditions are. We do not know how to go about case-finding and/or identification of these conditions. We have little knowledge of how to discriminate levels of severity, and are poor at prognosticating future courses with or without available treatments, in many instances.

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> Finally we do not know how to "treat" either of these social conditions in the sense of bringing about enduring change in the parents involved, with much consistency and with any efficiency. Other than that, we are scientifically in an excellent position.[4]

The picture is, in point of fact, a little less bleak, but the complexity of the multiplicity and interaction of the variables involved in the predisposing and precipitating conditions is such that we shall probably never unravel the skein, even though we may be able, in time, to trace a few of the main threads. The report of the Community Welfare Advisory Committee into Child Abuse in South Australia[5] attempts a listing of these factors, breaking them up into causative factors related to community attitudes, causative factors related to the family, causative factors related to the abusers, causative factors related to the abused child, socio-economic precipitating factors, social precipitating factors, personality characteristics as precipitating factors and personal health factors. All in all, they mention forty-six variables under these headings. Few of them have so far been empirically established; others are, strictly speaking, not researchable, as they focus on past-generational child-rearing practices of which we have anecdotal as distinct from empirically derived knowledge. This is in no way meant to denigrate or deride the efforts of that committee, rather I am using it to illustrate the difficulties involved in the search for information. According to Gelles,[6] much of the current research concentrates on a psychopathological model, which explains child abuse as a function of a psychological pathology. Parent abusers are classed as psychopaths, or are held to have specific psychological characteristics, e.g. severe emotional problems or defective character structures. The abusing parent is impulsive, immature, depressed, has poor emotional control, is quick to react with poorly controlled aggression. Some writers describe the child abuser as inadequate, self-centred, hypersensitive, having pervasive anger, dependent, egocentric, narcissistic, demanding and insecure . . . in sum, a perspective which places mental abnormality high in the scale of causation of child abuse. So far as the cause of such abnormality is concerned, there is a tendency to relate it to the parent's own child-rearing experience; the parent too was raised in the style of punishment and abuse and recreates this in bringing up his own children. Thus the linear model consists of:

*Early childhood experience* ➔ *produces psychopathic states* ➔ *produces child abuse.*

This model receives reinforcement from the earlier researches.[7] However, psychopathology theories as dominant explanations of child abuse are weakening, firstly because, as Gelles[6] points out, "some authors contradict themselves by first stating that the abusing parent is a psychopath and then stating that the child abuser is no different from the rest of society", and the inability to pinpoint the personality traits that characterise the pathology, as well as the general lack of methodological sophistication of many of the studies. Secondly, there is the gathering strength of the non-psychological theories which place causation more in the socio-cultural milieu, with greater emphasis on economic and material factors.

Certainly we must pay regard to the socio-cultural setting in which families operate. The way children are treated and the way that we believe parents ought to behave toward them as part of child-rearing practice is a matter of culture. Richard Light,[9] in an important article, reminds us of Aristotle, who held that a son, like a slave, was a father's property and hence there can be no injustice to one's own property. Roman law in its turn gave the Roman father the legal right to sell, abandon, kill or offer in sacrifice all of his children. Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac, which today would surely have brought the child before an Australian children's court as being in need of care or protection, seemed acceptable practice in those days, but nearer our times Colonial America gave a father a statutory right to put his child to death, and if necessary, to call upon the assistance of the colony officers to do so, and in the nineteenth century, Britain's social history is full of examples of the most cruel practices of parents against their children, which were not fully legislated against until 1889. Today, in Australia, we tolerate "reasonable" physical punishment of children, and we allow male circumcision of babies for ritual purposes, although we would class female circumcision for the same reasons as gross physical abuse. We are not consistent, nor ever will be, and therein lies one of the problems of finding ways of totally eliminating child abuse.

David Gil[10] was the first writer to attempt an investigation of child abuse on a nation-wide basis in the U.S.A., and approximately 1,500 people were interviewed. He concentrated attention on the respondents' attitudes to the problem, the incidence of child abuse and the socio-economic settings of child abuse. Six out of every ten of his respondents thought that anybody could at some time injure a child in his care, though far fewer related this to themselves. However, there were 15.9 per cent who admitted that at one time or another they could hardly refrain from injuring a child in their care; Gil comments that this 15.9 per cent is likely to represent a low estimate . . . the true proportion of adults in the U.S.A. population who come close to injuring a child physically is likely to be higher. But what is equally disturbing about Gil's findings is the intrusion of environmental, socio-economic and other non-psychological factors. There was an over-representation of non-whites, reflecting a ghetto-type living by non-whites in urban situations. This linked with a higher incidence of socio-economic deprivation, fatherless families and large families. For the whole of the sample a family size of four or more children in which abuse occurred was nearly twice as high as for the U.S. population as a whole. Educational and occupational status of parents was fairly low and unemployment was disproportionately high, about three times the then national rate. Income was lower than nation-wide equivalents; four out of every ten families were on public assistance. There was high geographical mobility; nearly half of the families had been living in their current homes for a year or less. On these factors, families with a low economic background were over-represented (not surprisingly especially among the non-white families). This part of the picture must be added to the psychological one. Perhaps it is useful to remind ourselves that Gil was researching parents who had physically abused their children, though a third of the abusive parents were also regarded as neglectful.

## . . . AND HOW MANY ARE THERE?

One of the problems we are struggling with is to estimate the overall size of the phenomenon. We may take Gil's study first. He suggests that, on the basis of three per cent of his sample reporting that they "personally knew families involved in incidents of child abuse resulting in physical injury in the twelve months preceding the interview . . .", there is an upper bound of between 2.5 and just over 4 million cases of child abuse; this in a population where there were, in 1973, about 67 million persons under the age of eighteen. Richard Light[11] who reworked Gil's figures concluded that "one child in every hundred in America is physically abused, sexually molested or severely neglected".

One must be cautious in transposing such proportions to Australia since conditions are not the same, but if we are tempted to do so then we have a child population of approximately 4.6 million and on this estimate the incidence of child abuse is 46,000 cases a year. But there are no reliable incidence figures for Australia; indeed, there are hardly any figures. The South Australian study[12] cites some figures relating to particular aspects of abuse based on surveys of hospitals and child services, but the figures gained do not enable one to make any estimates as to incidence in proportion to the child population. Even so, during the fifteen months' span of the surveys, the number of children detected as actually abused reached 273 and those said to be "at risk", 910. In Victoria, Dr. John Birrell[13] reports that the Royal Children's Hospital diagnosed 257 cases and had five deaths from maltreatment [*sic*] over twenty-four months of 1974-75, and estimates a figure of 12,500 children *under five* who are possibly at risk of neglect, and makes further conjectures drawn from figures of families in poverty, statistics of the State School Relief Fund and the rising number of cases reaching the Social Welfare Department pursuant to section 16 of the Children's Welfare Act, as "not provided with proper food, clothing or medical care".

Whilst the task and problems of calculating incidence and prevalence rates remains to be done in Australia, we are receiving evidence from a number of sources that the abuse situation is too large to be tolerated. In any case, large incidence or small, there are many who would argue that "one abused child is one too many".

## . . . AND WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT IT?

The perplexities occasioned by not knowing the extent of the problem can be cited as a reason for not doing anything, at least not on any scale. Why set up any large-scale project of detection, identification, diagnosis, treatment, if you don't know how many cases there will be? Again to cite the work of Richard Light,[14] he discusses the policy of X-ray diagnostic screening in ascertaining actual abuse. If that were to become standard procedure and if one child in a hundred is really abused, even if this case were detected by X-ray, ninety-nine would be needlessly exposed to X-ray diagnosis. Other than that, forms of error can creep in; one (a false negative) lies in examining a child who is in fact abused but where abuse is not detected, and another (a false positive) concluding that a child has been abused when he or she really has not been, and he goes on to show statistically that for a given figure of the children diagnosed as having been abused only 15.4 per cent were really abused. Approximately 85 per cent of the parents accused of abusing their children would have been falsely accused. On strictly statistical probability, the value of detection of this kind may not be worth while—but what is the value of a child's life?

In point of fact, such prevention/treatment programmes as there are, are usually on a small scale and deal with either an already detected or diagnosed situation or a highly-probable-at-risk situation.[15] Typically they involve a small group of parents, with at least one young child in the family and consist of counselling work for the parents, community day-care for the child (or even temporary care away from their own home), home-making, home-help and home-advisory service, and of course any physical medical treatment service that may be required. There are, however, more ambitious projects which are beginning to be reported, such as the community programme in Massachusetts[16] which has set up machinery to identify and intervene in situations where childuren are designated as "vulnerable". The programme operates through a co-ordinated system of inter-agency and hospital communication setting up a community cross-indexing *Register of Vulnerable Children* and a system of quality-control. Such an effort must be seen as a start only, since detection and identification are stages in a process which should read:

*detection* ➔ *identification* ➔ *support-care-protection-prevention* ➔ *rehabilitation* ➔ *nonrecurrence of abuse*

## LONG-TERM, SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

There would be few who would countenance child abuse as something desirable, there are few who, having perpetrated it, unless in such a state of mind that they cannot know what they are doing, are not themselves anguished, desolated and self-hating, especially in the severe physical-abuse situations. And yet, Australian society, like many other Western-type, industrial, urban societies, provides a conducive environment for child abuse in its many manifestations. The mother's role in society is usually perceived as inferior compared with that of the economic provider, who has more status; erroneous expectations are created through the media of the roles of wife and mother — it doesn't necessarily turn out like the ads on telly have it, or the soap operas even, and the weekly magazines; and there is no training for parenthood, and help with child-rearing has to be asked for and is not afforded willingly. Furthermore, people really have a fairly narrow range of alternative life-styles available to them and adult roles which they can perform—frustration commonly results, which, coupled with stress, can find a ready release in child abuse. A culture, too, can justify physical punishment or "hard living" in the interests of character formation and inculcation of good habits. It adds up to a cultural environment where the very vulnerability of children serves as a temptation for the release of tension, frustration and stress. In the working classes this may manifest itself more in physical punishment—and there is evidence that this is their preferred means; in the middle classes it may manifest itself more in mental or emotional violence. The bruises are not so readily visible, more difficult to detect, though the effect may be as long-lasting.

If we address ourselves to this situation, we have to be about the business of attitude change in order to induce behavioural change with beneficial effects for the child. That is a tall order but not impossible. Australian birth-rate is falling and may be approaching Zero Population Growth. If that does happen, children will then become precious and scarce resources meriting protection. In such circumstances, attitudes may be the more easily influenced. One of the likely and really quite immediate effects of the slow-down of the birthrate could well be an improvement in quality of schooling. After decades of schools, themselves poorly invested in, struggling to keep up with ever-increasing numbers who somehow had to be processed, they will find there are enough resources for the lesser numbers. The use of schools called in to help in the search for child-abuse remedies was at one time so much pie in the sky, but is now, and really quite suddenly, a real possibility. Similarly, of course, the recently expanded health and welfare services can expect to deal with lesser numbers, although there are still far too few services of every description. But even so, initiatives such as child-care programmes on the lines of Project Care,[17] and locally in Victoria additionally, on the lines foreshadowed in the Consultative Council—Pre-School Child Development in Victoria[18] are examples of initiatives not angled specifically toward child-abuse situations but offering support there too, unobtrusively and undramatically. Projects like these, aimed at the whole community must be counted as the long-term strategies. There are others too, e.g. publicity and outreach programmes, and educational programmes in parenthood and child care. Provided on a large scale, freely available and easily accessible, they would play an important part.

The other needs—economic—may not belong to the categories of long-term strategies. Poverty features strongly in abuse situations, so do single-parent families and so do large families. According to the Henderson Report[19] the extent of poverty in Australia increases with family size: 8.9 per cent of families with four children are very poor, i.e. at or below the poverty line, and 18.6 per cent with five children or more. That compares with 7.3 per cent of all very poor families. Fatherless families are even worse off at 37.5 per cent and motherless families at 15.9 per cent. The strategies here cannot wait for long-term solutions and they could be dealt with quite swiftly if the understanding and determination were there at the political level of action.

The shorter-term strategies will need to be schemes that are geared to gathering data, cross-referencing and identifying them, setting up detection systems and providing programmes, most of them locally based, along the lines of a child welfare emergency service programme in Tennessee, U.S.A.[20] This is run by the Department of Public Welfare and provides for a seven-days-per-week emergency intake, emergency care-taker and home-maker services, and foster care. To this we could add others, such as the child-care services which, as mentioned before, have already begun to be developed, as well as telephone "hot-lines", voluntary aides, etc. If such could be developed as part of a comprehensive child welfare programme which links with general supportive services for families, health care, including preventive health, substitute or alternative care for children, a revised system of what are now known as children's courts, and proper social and recreational facilities for children, we could feel easier about doing something about child abuse.

Something of this order is in the recommendations of the South Australian report, which incidentally includes a regional panel system and compulsory reporting.[21] In Victoria too, a group of people have worked over the past eighteen months, under the auspices of the Health Department, reviewing various aspects of child abuse and their report should shortly be available.

Child abuse is an area which seems ready-made for the multi-professional approach — physicians, psychologists, nurses, social workers, educators can and do come together as one team to confront the problems; what is more, according to what is known about this, it works.

Furthermore, things are moving fast in Australia on this front. It is to be fervently hoped that government economic pressure won't arrest the flow just at a time when a lot of people are prepared to spend a lot of their valuable time in their various ways to confront the problems. Refuse them the needs now, and that enthusiasm will not be sustained; it will weaken and disappear and the transport of concern that has just started moving again after many years of inactivity will once more come to a halt.

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# Good Programmes for Five-Year-Olds

## The Five-Year-Old — What is he Like?

By Dr. ELEANOR KIRKLAND*

FIVE is the beginning of the end—the end of the pot belly, the end of the cuddly lap hug, the end of the lisp, and the end of the unquestioned faith in adult omnipotence. Five is the end of babyhood, a time parents and teachers find both satisfying and unsettling—satisfying because one can reason with a five-year-old, unsettled because fives are so unpredictable.

Parents look at their bright-eyed five-year-olds with nostalgic remembrance of when they were babies, but the children do not believe they were ever babies at all. To parents, five is at last the age when reason and dialogue promise the long-awaited civilised behaviour that is close to the adults' own; to the child, five is power and strength, to be tested and expressed with as full a measure of autonomy as they dare take. Very different perceptions—and the beginning of the generation gap!

There is an avant-garde among the fives. They are no longer dependable about holding a parent's hand or reliable about observing established limitations that challenge their feeling of "I bet I can do that myself". They are on the threshold of the push into independent, autonomous boy and girl behaviour associated with the middle years of childhood, when the spell of child society draws them away from the taken-for-granted security of the family.

If one looks back at the long distance children have already come in five short years, one can understand the cocky sense of self-importance five-year-olds so often display. From a state of complete physical dependency at birth, when any movement or satisfaction of need called for a mother's good grace and willing arms, they have arrived at sufficient agility and bodily control to allow them far more latitude than they need just for getting about. Fives are so pleased with themselves over their powers that they often set up physical obstacles to conquer just so they can enjoy their bodily competency all the more. They go up the steps of the slide in rhythmic patterns and go down the slide backwards, head first. They time the bumps on the see-saw so that the smooth up-and-down rhythm will have drama and suspense built in. They ride their bikes at breakneck speed, unless grown-ups stop them. They stand at the top of the jungle gym with arms outstretched and crow.

They not only move with wonderful ease and freedom, but also have learned in their first five years, all kinds of difficult feats of co-ordination that society demands of them. They eat with utensils (unless they choose not to); they know about toileting (although they often just make it when absorbed in play); and they can do a superb job of washing their hands (they rarely have time, however). They can blow their noses and wipe their own backsides; put on their clothing (in their own fashion, it is true, but it's on), and turn lights on and off without thinking how it is done. And they can talk in long sentences. In a word, they are pretty much indoctrinated in the culture of our society (and their bodies are obedient to *their* wills, not to their parents').

Fives like to build, and to make things. They are active, often boisterously and noisily so, and, most significantly, they have not lived long enough for the outside world to have seriously impinged on their very personal, egocentric view of what is important.

Such feelings of competency as they have are based on solid achievement of a physical character, gained by trial and error, but ending in a sense of mastery which they can identify as their own.

The unevenness of development characteristic of all childhood is easily obscured in five-year-olds because of the children's so-recently-realised, remarkable facility with language. Adults understandably assume that the level of verbal proficiency a five-year-old displays represents his level of proficiency in all areas of functioning—if he *talks* like an adult, he must *think* and *feel* like one. However, five-year-olds, despite fine vocabularies, are known to cry with loud wails and heartbreaking sobs when they are disappointed or frustrated; and, immediately after impressing an adult with their knowledgeableness in a stream of verbal power, can smack or kick another child with complete non-verbal gusto and "moral" justification.

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They come up with endless variations of error on supposedly understood themes, and make more mistakes out of sheer ignorance than one could possibly imagine. Contradictory behaviour is commonplace at five and continues to exasperate parents and teachers for many years after five. But fives are so dramatically competent with words (in comparison with the toddler period they have only just left) and so close to formal school-age at the same time, that they are peculiarly vulnerable to adult expectations and demands which are out of keeping with their own concerns and need for competency, even though these are closely related to the adults' own.

The contemporary pressure for reading and writing in the early years is a case in point; it is far more related to parental concern about college entry a dozen years away than to five-year-old need, style of learning, or even the reality of college admission. The pressure is rationalised by the speculative theory that present-day five-year-olds are actually better developed and more "advanced" than those of an earlier era, because mass media and global transportation have broadened the children's horizons considerably. But careful observations by seasoned teachers of young children reveal sophistication to be only skin-deep.

So you might ask, *"Are young children really more advanced?"* Children certainly talk more freely to adults than they once did, a consequence of the progressive elimination of fear from the modern adult-child relationship. They share their observations and comments, ask good and even unanswerable questions, and one can marvel at their growth in understanding in so brief a span of time. Many children have an impressive accretion of detailed information about all kinds of things which is certainly a sign of good intelligence, but it is hardly even or consistent. In any case, how can we assess such a thing? If one is to judge by the percentage of children with learning problems, which has remained fairly constant over decades, then the children of the uneducated have certainly not made the dramatic leap that is sometimes claimed for the children of the middle classes. Are children at the same stage of life so differently capable that the mass media can seriously change some and hardly touch others?

Nevertheless, even assuming the possibility of greater knowledge among responsive young children of a mass-media age, it is questionable whether an increase in verbal knowledge and expression has much effect on the capacity for understanding in depth or on the style of behaviour of children with no more than five years of living and growing behind them. What could the five-year-old block-builder, whom I observed not long ago making a ship to carry food to Biafra, have possibly understood of the phrase he was repeating with solemnity to his age-mates, "The most important thing in life is life itself"? Or examine the unexpected interchange between two boys who announced loudly that they were dinosaurs. Down on all fours (a piece of five-year-old behaviour unchanged over centuries), the two were hissing at each other and making clawing, scratching movements, until one of the children suddenly stopped short and peered somewhat anxiously at his fellow-dinosaur. "Then you'll change back to yourself, O.K.?" Or listen to the five-year-old whose teacher read a storybook account of a battle between Tyrannosaurus rex and Brontosaurus. He heard the sentence, "And his breath came in gasps", and promptly interpreted, "That means all the gas came out of it."

The drawings of contemporary fives are no more complex, the capacity for judgement no sharper, the feelings of helplessness when they get sick or into trouble no less painful, than they have ever been, as far as we know. Young children today play boat on the floor singing "The Yellow Submarine" instead of "Chug, Chug, Chug, I'm a little Tug"; they imitate the flight of a jet with the same simple swooping gesture with which they once undoubtedly imitated the flight of an arrow. Five-year-old girls are more likely to build with blocks than they once were, and five-year-old boys are less ashamed to play house, but that is true principally among children of sophisticated parents. Children of conventional parents play out society's sex roles with complete faithfulness to conventional ideals.

If children are to feel competent deep inside themselves, it is essential that we as parents and teachers look at the emerging strengths and potential assets of every stage of growth. One must see realistically the limitations imposed by age and inexperience as well as the promise of a growing person. There is good reason to try to gauge this as honestly as one can. When children strive prematurely, and therefore too hard, to achieve what will come much more easily only a little later, there can be side-effects as a result of the inner pressure that are not worth the gains.

Five-year-old children are capable of good, sound thinking; they are responsive to ideas and reason.

Fives grow competent by using fingers and toes, eyes, ears and nose to find out what they want to know and to act upon the knowledge they have. They are in the process of learning how to substitute words for hands and feet to express strongly felt wants. They still prefer to run, not walk; to climb, not sit; to do, not watch. Action response takes precedence over the sedentary, and it will be many years before these inclinations are reversed.

Fives are hungry for friends. Keeping a five-year-old at home on a rainy day or after an illness is, in some families, a disaster worse than a leak in the roof. The need for friendship at five represents a high peak in a developmental progression of social awareness that began with curiosity about children at about two; grew into self-assertion and outright selfishness somewhere about three; veered toward comparison of self with others (to the others' disadvantage) at about four; and finally arrived at an honestly expressed need for children to play with (along with a real shortage of techniques) at about five.

It is not easy for children at this stage to share leadership, materials, ideas or bosom companions, despite their desperate hunger for friends. Children do need to work things out for themselves; they need the struggle, the conflict, and the tears, to value the pleasures that come with satisfactory solutions. While they do not need, and ought not to have, adults hovering over them, they do need help in understanding that what their companions desire and fear may be as valid as, even if different from, their own feelings. And they need help in the kind of social techniques that, in the end, make it possible for them to achieve their goals.

When children are helped by adults to recognise what is fair, reasonable and manageable in relation to the needs of other children and the play situation, their link to reality, and therefore to mental health, is being strengthened in an important way. Five-year-olds find it hard to disentangle the convincing character of their own strong wants and fears from the objective reality of the external situation. If they are afraid of another child taking a toy, they may act defensively and not in response to what the child is actually doing. If they are angry or frustrated, they will assume another child's guilt all too readily. If they want someone else's toys, they may become blind to the other child's feelings and simply help themselves.

Five-year-olds are remarkable thinkers. Their interests cover an amazingly broad scope, but fives seldom pursue an interest in great depth or persist in it without interruption for extensive periods of time. Almost everything is fair game for their curiosity and interest, but "almost everything" refers in the main to what is available to them through their eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and fingers, or if vicarious, can be conceived in concrete, sensory terms. Parents can remember the rigours of marketing with their four-year-olds, who had to touch all the cans and boxes, had to poke their fingers into the cash register, had to taste the contents of sealed packages, and were otherwise a great nuisance in the market. Most fives no longer do that—they have learned some controls. But the controls operate in adult-prescribed situations as part of their growing knowledge of what is right and wrong. When they themselves want to learn something, they continue to use their senses to examine and investigate. They pick up insects and stare at them intently; they crackle dry leaves and clap stones or blocks together to hear the sound; they smell empty perfume bottles and lick their ice-cream sensuously. Their senses are out like antennas all the time, ready to draw back into themselves the myriad impressions which their minds then sort and classify.

Classification follows two major patterns. For one thing, children begin early to generalise from their repeated experiences with similar objects, events and people: forks are to eat with, dogs bark, pressure on pencils leaves marks on paper, grandmothers give you anything you want. Generalisations are, in the main, based on their own concrete and sensory activity. Adults supply the important ingredient of words which allow children to expand their understanding by stating, thereby objectifying, their generalisations.

Something different is involved in the more abstract concepts. While, these, too, grow out of sensory and concrete experience in early childhood, they do not develop as simple generalisations of objects, events and people that have literal likeness. Instead, children come to perceive the non-obvious characteristics which objects may share, abstracting the concept of "softness" from a pillow, a rabbit, a a toy cat, and a mother's bosom, all of which they have touched. They learn "above" from reaching up to high shelves, bumping their heads on the underside of the table, craning their necks, and lifting their heads, all physical experiences; they learn "noisy" and "quiet" from hearing; "pink" and "yellow" from seeing; "bitter", "sour" and "sweet" from tasting. Here, too, appropriate words offered by adults assist the growth of meaning, language and thinking to grow together.

The natural world is especially exciting to five-year-olds. Everything that moves catches their eyes, most often if it is at their feet or not far above eye-level. Bugs, ants, kittens, flies, spiders and worms inevitably mobilise them to exploration and experimentation. Our industrial civilisation excites them whenever they themselves can see some of the processes by which things happen—cement-mixers, airplane flights and landings, traffic controlled and manoeuvred, escalators endlessly running, boats docked and leaving, dump-truck deliveries. People interest them mainly in terms of the action roles. The clue to what offers learning possibilities for them lies in the very style by which they learn. Fives are great imitators and use the information they gather about the world in their play. They set up pretend situations within which they play out roles, thereby pinning down what they understand. The activity they imitate must, therefore, have fairly obvious and clear relationships, and the meaningfulness of the activity must be seen in physical terms. They can imitate a pilot at his own controls, but they cannot reproduce the machinery behind the knobs; they can imitate a snake slithering through the grass, but they can do nothing with a hidden process that takes place at the push of a button; they can leap like a frog or sling cans like a garbage collector; but they do not know what to make of the work of an accountant, a lawyer, a stockbroker, a publisher or a judge. They cannot imitate what they do not grasp as some kind of whole; yet their way of learning is dependent on the imitative process through which they focus on what they are learning about.

Their questions generally refer to the more literal and obvious aspects of what they see rather than to subtleties, even when they ask about birth and death. Nevertheless, despite the apparent limitations of sensory orientation and style, the amount of information children are capable of absorbing can be startlingly impressive.

Among the many important figures of the twentieth century who have studied children in order to understand them better, the Swiss psychologist Piaget stands confirmed as the giant. Now an old man, he has spent all his life in concentrated, persistent investigation of children's growth in thinking and learning and his work is being disseminated all over the world as guidelines to the education of children. Piaget's findings have a kind of neutral quality because he did not set out to prove anything, only to find out how children learn. He began and continued his studies by interviewing children, observing them and offering them simple to complex tasks involving concepts of all kinds. The interviews and tasks were grouped around different areas of intellectual understanding, such as language, mathematical concepts and morality.

Piaget's careful study of children led to insights into certain universalities of childhood thinking and learning. The first of these discoveries is the existence of a developmental sequence in each important area of understanding, a sequence through which all children pass. The implication of this finding for education is that certain kinds of concepts cannot be understood by children before some degree of maturing has taken place, no matter how much we try to teach them. On the other hand, the exact time at which the stages or sequences begin and end varies with individual children. It is thought that the kind and amount of experience a child has affects his maturation and accounts in some degree for an earlier or later emergence of a given stage. Still, there are limits: no five-year-old is capable of thinking generally like a ten-year-old, although he may show a specific aptitude in one area—mathematics for example. Appropriate experiences, therefore, seem to help children achieve the next stage of understanding earlier than if they simply "matured". But this is almost impossible to pin down. In reality, no one simply "matures", and no child just grows. Every child interacts with people and the environment for better or for worse, and growth ascribed to maturation is always a combination of genes and opportunity.

Important to school learning is Piaget's discovery that among children between five and seven sequential development in the direction of abstract thinking occurs within a normal range: that is, some children begin at five, others at six, and most by seven, to handle abstraction. When Piaget's findings about thought processes eventually became widely known to physchologists, two common responses followed. Some looked at the evidence and asked thoughtfully, "What are the experiences that support maturation?" But others looked at the evidence and asked impatiently, "Can't maturation be hastened?" In these two subtly different questions lie a value system and a bias about achievement.

It is with this in mind that we look to the early school years (kindergarten and first year in primary school), the five-year-old experiences.

## What Goes Into a Good Day for Young Children?

By Dr. ELEANOR KIRKLAND

For almost a decade research on approaches to early childhood education has sought to investigate the effectiveness of various kinds of programmes in changing the behaviour and enhancing the development of young children. An examination of the most successful programmes reveals that they differ in many respects in their philosophy, teaching techniques, and programme content. But even though they differ in many ways, analysis indicates that successful programmes have certain elements in common. These elements have been identified in rather carefully controlled field-research situations. This means that we, as teachers, no longer need to base our educational practices solely on instinct or unverified conviction. For the first time, we are able to justify the inclusion of elements of curriculum because research is beginning to provide supportive evidence that they are valuable. Let's take a look at those elements which were found consistent in all successful programmes for young children, which would include naturally the five-year-old:

1. *Good Human Relationships are a Fundamental Ingredient of a Good Day.* All good E.C.E. programmes are built on the foundation of sound human relationships. Warmth and empathetic understanding have been shown to be effective means of influencing young children's positive adjustment to

early schooling. It is apparent that genuine caring about the children and about other adults is fundamental to success.

In order for warmth and personal contact to flourish, the day must be planned and paced so there are numerous opportunities for person-to-person, one-to-one encounters. In practical terms, this means that groups must be kept small and that occasions must be provided where children can move freely about, making personal choices and generating individual contacts. It is the quality of the individualised, personal caring and the chance to talk together that are significant.

2. *The Parent Should be Included as Part of the School Life.* The day is past when parents were expected to leave their children at the school door. Today we can point to mounting research that confirms that inclusion of parents in the educational process results in longer-lasting educational gains for the child.

It is possible to include parents in a variety of welcoming, participating ways. The value of close interaction between the home and school is being increasingly documented. Therefore, we should do all we can to make this link a strong one.

3. *There should be a Balance Between Self-Selection and Teacher-Direction — Both Approaches are Valuable.* The idea that young children can be trusted to choose educational experiences for themselves that will benefit them goes all the way back in educational theory to Rousseau and John Dewey, and the concept is experiencing rebirth in the British Infant School and in the early-childhood schools in the U.S. The virtue of self-selection is that it fosters independence and builds within the child responsibility for making his own decisions. It also provides an excellent way to individualise the curriculum because each child is free to pursue his own interests and to suit himself when he is free to choose.

Despite the virtues and attractiveness of the open environment, research indicates that one should not rely entirely on self-selection. At least in programmes designed to serve children who come from disadvantaged environments, it is now evident that planned, structured experiences that are teacher-directed are more effective in producing cognitive gains than are programmes lacking this characteristic. Even though the cognitive self (the part of the child that is concerned with mental activity) is only one aspect of the child's personality, adequate mental development is so closely related to success in school that promising techniques must be taken into consideration when planning a curriculum.

It would be ideal, of course, if all activities were attractive enough that the child would want to choose them spontaneously, but there are times when youngsters should participate in learning activities that will enhance their growth, even if they are not particularly attracted to them. It isn't fair to let a child graduate from kindergarten with a degree in "trike-riding" coupled with a deadly inability to put five words together into a coherent sentence.

4. *Good Curriculum Must be Planned with Definite Objectives in Mind.* Evidence is mounting that formulating and carrying out a specific plan for early-childhood programmes is fundamental to success, at least when working with disadvantaged children. The value of establishing specific objectives has been convincingly demonstrated in programmes having such contrasting philosophies as the Piagetian classrooms of Weikart and the learning-drill classrooms of Bereiter and Englemann. The value of identifying objectives and formulating plans by which they may be reached is often questioned or ignored by early-childhood teachers on the grounds that it may deaden creativity, spontaneity and opportunities for self-selection. Of course, one would not want the formulation of a plan to result in a return to that style of teaching; but at the same time, we should realise that a curriculum is not something that can be relied on to develop spontaneously as the day marches along. Days must be planned and overall goals identified and implemented to assure educational success. There are times when the marvellous welling-up of an idea or activity does take place, and these teachable moments are to be sought after and treasured—but this does not happen all the time. Nor does reliance on such events assure that every important area will be covered, or that the necessary goals will be achieved, or that needs of individual children will be taken into consideration. Only planning coupled with evaluation can accomplish these objectives.

5. *A Good Programme Should be Comprehensive.* An aspect of planning that deserves special consideration is that curriculum be comprehensive in coverage. An easy way to think about this is to picture the child as being composed of a number of selves—the physical self, the emotional self, the social self, the creative self, and the cognitive self.

The physical self includes not only large and fine motor development but also handling routines, since such things as eating, resting, and toileting contribute much to physical comfort. For the emotional self, we consider ways to increase and sustain mental health, to use discipline to foster self-control, to cope with aggression and to foster self-esteem. Under the heading of social self are placed ways to build social concern and kindliness, learning to enjoy work and learning to value the cultures of other people. The creative self covers the area of self-expression through the use of art materials and creativity expressed in play and applied in thought. Finally, the cognitive or intellectual self is considered in terms of language development, the development of horizontal and vertical curriculum, and the development of specific learning abilities. This last self is the newest to receive intensive consideration and analysis in early-childhood education.

6. *Individualisation of Instruction is Important.* Research indicates that the teacher will experience greater success if she identifies her educational goals clearly and carries out activities designed to teach these goals. The real art of teaching lies in her ability to clothe these bare-boned goals in the raiment of individual children's interests and pleasures. Small groups provide the intimacy that makes it possible for the teacher to know each youngster well and to plan with particular individuals in mind.

Not only should broad goals be personalised to fit the children's interests, but specific goals should be formulated to suit individual children, since every child is different and learns at his own rate. Prompt assessment of the children's skills is invaluable because it can help the teacher identify specific needs of individual children.

7. *A Good Programme has Stability and Regularity Combined with Flexibility.* Young children need to know what is likely to happen during the day. This means that the order of events should be generally predictable. Predictability enables the child to prepare mentally for the next event; it makes compliance with routine more likely and helps children feel secure.

At the same time, time schedules or routines should not be allowed to dominate the school. Rather than sticking right to the clock, it is better to maintain an orderly but elastic schedule where play and free activity periods can be extended when those moments occur when the majority of the children are involved in activities that interest them intensely.

8. *A Good Programme has Variety.* Children need many different kinds of experiences as well as changes in basic experiences. What a difference there is between the classroom that has the same pet rat and bowl of goldfish all year and the one that first raises a rabbit, then borrows a broody hen, and next has two snakes as visitors! Lack of variety is also shown in classrooms that offer the omnipresent easel as their "major" art experience and others that set out all the blocks at the beginning of the year and leave it at that.

Children should be offered various levels of difficulty in activity materials. Teachers need to be especially careful to offer materials that are genuinely interesting to the five-year-old. A dearth of stimulating fresh curricula is the commonest cause of posses of children galloping through block areas and housekeeping corners, spreading destruction as they go.

The curriculum should not only offer a variety of levels of difficulty, it should also become more challenging and move from simple to more complex activities as the year progresses and the children mature and gain competence.

9. *Learning Must be Based on Actual Experience and Participation.* Children learn best if allowed to use all their senses as avenues of learning. Participatory experience is an essential ingredient in early-childhood education. This means that the curriculum must be based on real experiences with real things rather than limited to verbal discussions and pictures commonly (though not necessarily ideal) used when teaching older children. Because educators of young children from Montessori to Bank Street have emphasised the value of real experience as being fundamental to successful education, because Piaget has also stressed the importance of participatory experience in the development of intelligence, one might think this principle need not be reiterated. However, the current influx of word-oriented rather than action-oriented teaching materials on display in the commercial exhibits of most conferences on early childhood and the fact that these materials continue to sell make it evident that this point must be stated very clearly: young children learn best when they can manipulate material, experiment, try things out, and talk about what is happening as it takes place. Talking without doing is largely meaningless for a child between three and eight years of age.

10. *Play is an Indispensable Avenue of Learning.* Another long-held value in early-childhood education is an appreciation of play as facilitator of learning. Teachers who have watched children at play know the intent, purposeful seriousness they bring to this activity. Play is a medium used by children to translate experience into something internally meaningful to them. Piaget maintains that children use it as an important symbolic activity, but it serves many purposes beyond this function. Play clarifies concepts, provides emotional relief, facilitates social development and creates periods of clearly satisfying delight. It is crucial that there be ample time in the curriculum for self-initiated play.

11. *School Should be Pleasureful.* Probably the most significant value a teacher can convey is the conviction that school is satisfying fun. Not only should the experience be pleasureful for the children, but it should also be a joy for the teacher and other adults. Young children have their trying moments, but they are delightful. Pleasure, humour, and laughter should be very much a part of each school day.

# Developing the Cognitive Aspects of the Child's Self in an Integrated Curriculum.

By ELEANOR KIRKLAND

I WOULD LIKE to begin by reading a quote from *The Sense of Wonder*, by Rachel Carson:

> I sincerely believe that for the child . . . it is not half so important to *know* as to *feel*. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare the soil. Once the emotions have been aroused—a sense of the beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration and love—then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not ready to assimilate.

A "good" curriculum for young children features intellectual stimulation and language development and is based on continuous assessment of teaching procedures, children's learning and teaching learning interactions.

This curriculum emphasises individual pacing, each child's uniqueness and a wide range of teacher roles and strategies, which help to stabilise and increase children's intellectual and linguistic development. Affective development is charted through acceptance of children's feelings, positive channelling of aggression and fostering autonomy in many specific ways. Feelings of competence through mastery of various tasks and the development of family approval of the child's achievements in visible skill areas are the main source of motivation.

Learning activities flow from spontaneous self-chosen activities to specific structured tasks, games and constructional projects. Informality and individual choices within well-defined limits prevail throughout the programme. Individual or tutorial instruction is stressed with considerable de-emphasis on total group activities. Social development is emphasised through procedures of classroom management, encouragement of independence and self-regulation and teacher guidance in conflict situations.

Cognitive and language development are specifically programmed through experiences and through sequenced, detailed and structured tasks; games and teacher-child and child-child interactions.

This curriculum draws mainly on elements from child development, empirical studies of young children's classroom learning, linguistic theory, curriculum developments in specific content areas and diagnosed learning needs of individual children. Such developmental theorists as Piaget, Erikson, O. K. Moore and others are drawn upon, in their emphasis upon play and natural development, but the programme seeks to stabilise and increase the child's cognitive and linguistic growth through effective teacher roles in the classroom.

The learning goals are identical for all children. However, the rate of progress toward these goals is individual and unique for each child. The plan for teaching is based on a diagnosis of each child's learning ability, his skills and understandings and his interests. Knowledge of unique interests of the participating child directs the selection of materials for use with that child. Continuous diagnosis of learning levels provides the information needed to select structure models that utilise the child's competency or skills as new learnings are initiated.

For the young child, channelling his learning energy means pursuing new learning through activities that capture his interests and capitalise on what he already knows and can do. In this way, the child will tend to choose, to undertake or repeat the learning many times, with or without the presence and active involvement of the adult.

Some assumptions in this curriculum about children as learners are clearly part of the programme and include the following:

1. The teacher expectations for children's activity and progress are conveyed through the clarity, selectivity and attractiveness of the arrangement of materials and equipment.
2. Rules and procedures for classroom management facilitate children's growth toward independence.
3. Teacher relationships with children are established on a one-to-one basis, valuing individual differences in interests, maturation and life experiences.

Let's take a look at developing the cognitive aspects. Two truisms which might be mentioned here are:

1. Cognitive learning prospers best when the child is physically healthy, emotionally stable and socially competent.
2. Cognition is so intertwined with creativity it is obvious that they should be discussed together.

Working with the cognitive aspects seems to bring out the worst in some teachers. They have a tendency to reduce intellectual learning to a series of isolated activities and drills, even for three- and four-year-olds. Rather than focusing intellectual learning on academic exercises or struggling to push adequately developing children beyond their peers, the teacher should realise that the real goal of cognitive development is giving each child ample opportunity to achieve performance standards that are reasonable and typical for his age. Such opportunities are helpful for all children, but they are vital for children from lower socio-economic groups, who tend to lag behind in this area.

In order for a child to achieve his full development, cognitive learning must be based on experience-centred, language-enhanced activities that add depth and richness to his thinking.

We must ask ourselves: What are the most important things we want children to learn in the cognitive sphere? Which goals should have priority?

Priority I: *Maintain the child's sense of wonder and curiosity.*

Most children come to school wondering about many things—the age of five is particularly appealing in this respect. They are avid gatherers of facts and are interested in everything. For this reason, it is a real joy to develop a cognitive curriculum for them. The most obvious way to maintain a child's sense of curiosity is by encouraging him to continue asking questions and helping him to find the answers. (Notice I said *helping him,* not *telling him.*)

Sometimes, rather than sustaining and encouraging curiosity, the teacher finds it necessary to awaken it. This is best done by presenting materials that are fascinating and by modelling curiosity and wonder as well. Asking simple questions about cause and effect or wondering together what will happen next, starts them observing, wondering and thinking for themselves. (For example, classroom has a mother rat—you might discuss whether she will do anything to get ready for her babies now that she is growing so fat and full of them; or—would it be better to keep the ice in the sun or shade until the time to make the ice-cream?) Given this kind of encouragement children who have not done so well will begin to question and wonder for themselves.

Priority II: *Let cognitive learning be a source of genuine pleasure.*

It is agreed by behaviourists that people tend to repeat an activity that is rewarding in some way. If so, then we should do everything in our power to attach pleasure to cognitive learning. This can be accomplished in a number of ways:

*Sustain interest by making the curriculum content relevant,* one that is based on the children's interests and that teaches him what he wants to know. A curriculum that doesn't accomplish this goal breeds disinterest, dissatisfied learners, no matter how old they are. Many teachers often lay out a year's curriculum in advance, formulated at best on knowledge of what other children in previous years have cared about. The danger of this approach (extremely long-range planning) is that the teacher may become so tied to it that she is unable to respond to the interests of children. This doesn't mean that the curriculum will be completely unpredictable—it does mean that it should be flexible enough to draw upon the current interests of the group.

The teacher's responsibility is to use the children's interests in two ways; she supplies the children with information and vocabulary about subjects that matter to them and she also employs the material as a medium for teaching a number of basic skills she feels they need to acquire. (For example, almost any topic of interest to children, whether it be animal homes, changes in the weather, can be used to provide interesting facts to foster proficiency in language, supply opportunities to learn the concepts of grouping, arranging them in appropriate order, or learning about simple cause-and-effect relationships.)

*Keep it challenging:* The teacher understands how to move the curriculum from easy to more difficult as the year progresses so that the bright five-year-old is not bored by too much repetition (at the same level all year). She knows what level of learning can reasonably be expected at various developmental stages—she doesn't expect too much nor too little: Learning opportunities should be challenging but not so difficult that they are beyond a child's grasp.

*Keep it real:* Learning should be based on actual experience.

*Keep it brief and unstressful:* Activities should be brief enough so that the children do not feel strained from working too long. It is better to stop before stress or boredom set in.

*Enjoy the experience with the children:* Cognitive learning is a fine place for a one-to-one experience that includes humour and fun: a time when the teacher enjoys activities with the children.

Priority III: *Bind cognitive learning to affective experience whenever possible.*

Feelings and social experience should be a fundamental part of cognitive learning. There are many opportunities for understanding and getting along with others during experiences that are primarily intellectual — these moments should be capitalised on as they occur.

Priority IV: *Accompany cognitive learning with language whenever possible.*

The word *accompany* is crucial here because language should be a part of rather than precede cognitive learning. The teacher plays a vital role in concept and mental development because it is she who blends language with experience, adding a word that the children cannot supply themselves, or asking a question more clearly. It is this *deliberate* interweaving that enriches the meaning of both experience and language for young children and increases the likelihood of mental activity and development.

Developing a cognitive curriculum that meets these priorities requires a great deal of flexibility and open-mindedness on the part of the teacher.

Planning is crucial to success. Three steps have to be considered if the model is to be maximally effective. *The first* is the utilisation of spontaneous contributions and interests that come from the children. *The second* is the horizontal expansion of their interest through the provision of additional information and experiences and *the third* is the development of a vertical curriculum that provides opportunities for the practice of certain concept-formation abilities that we believe underlie later intellectual competence.

When developing a spontaneous curriculum, the teacher takes whatever comes to hand and builds experiences around it. If a child brings a grasshopper to school, the teacher may draw on her picture file, poetry box, book-shelf to provide learning supplements based on this circumstance. If one of the children digs a rusty cup out of the sandbox, the teacher may help children plan a series of experiments to find out what rusts and what doesn't. *Advantages:* The curriculum will certainly be relevant since it stems from the children's interests; using children's ideas enhances individual children's feelings of being valued and important; it often includes the home in school activities.

*Dangers:* Excessive reliance on the spur-of-the-moment curriculum may result in the children gaining only a small peppering of factual knowledge on a multitude of subjects but lacking an overall sense of integration and direction in what they learn. It may mean that some valuable opportunities for practice of more specific conceptual abilities are not provided because the spontaneity of the "happenings" make advance planning impossible.

Despite these dangers, there remains a definite and important place for welcoming spontaneous interests as they well up from the children, although a spontaneous curriculum is insufficient to use by itself.

Many teachers go beyond the "hunt-and-peck" method of curriculum building and also seek to develop a thread of continuity. They usually accomplish this by selecting a topic and gradually enriching it by offering more and more experiences related to it.

Thus, if children were interested in birds, many different experiences involving every avenue of the senses could be provided. These might include:

—hatching a chicken
—making bird feeders
—bringing in old nests to study
—eating hard-boiled eggs
—raising a baby duck
—keeping a parakeet
—visiting an aviary, etc.

The list of possibilities is endless. These experiences are typically accompanied by language that identifies and labels different aspects of the experience. For example, children may learn a number of words such as: *feathers, wings, hatch, droppings, sea-gulls* and *robins*. You could add books, songs, pictures, poetry, etc., to widen the experiences and encourage use of symbolic representations as well.

Advantages to this broadening development of subject matter include the fact that the teacher can select the next experience. For example, she might lead the children to investigate things that fly, building kites blowing up balloons, visiting a mynah bird at the zoo, listening to a bird talk.

A horizontal curriculum is relevant to the real interests of children; is based on actual experiences; results in acquisition of facts and information; can be used to develop language ability; and is satisfying to the teacher because it draws upon her creative ability to present experiences that are attractively integrated and varied.

With all the strong values, it is easy to understand why many teachers of young children stop at this point and do not go on to the third step of curriculum development which has to do with fostering conceptual abilities.

Children need more than the opportunity to acquire the rich experience of vocabulary that a horizontal curriculum provides. They also need the chance to do some thinking. For this reason the third aspect of curriculum development should not be overlooked.

The third step is termed *vertical* because it builds on the experiences provided by horizontal development and uses its factual content as a medium for practising thinking skills. For example, while learning about birds, the teacher could develop the concept of grouping by providing opportunities for sorting pictures or models by asking the children, "How do we know these things are birds?" "Are airplanes birds?" "Are kites birds?" "Are robins birds?" The teacher might use the hatching of baby chickens to develop the children's ability to arrange events according to their sequence. They could help children understand cause-and-effect by comparing a raw egg with one they have boiled.

The inclusion of this kind of learning opportunity requires careful planning by the teacher. It requires that she participates actively with the children, since it is not only necessary to develop learning materials but also essential to talk with the children while they are using the materials, to ask them questions that encourage them to think.

There are, then, three steps in building a cognitive curriculum for the five-year-old. The first, which is most *spontaneous*, depends upon what happens from day to day in the school and capitalises on those teachable moments in a valuable way. The second, which seeks to link these related experiences together and expand them in a *horizontal* way, increases the richness of background and adds information to the child's knowledge. The third, *vertical* curriculum employs the horizontal content as a medium for developing and generalising important concepts that underlie later, more advanced thinking abilities. A well-rounded cognitive curriculum requires that the teacher appreciate and include all three of these aspects of curriculum development when she plans her educational programme.

Concept-formation abilities that should be included in a vertical curriculum are: grouping, conserving, matching, perceiving common relations, and understanding the relationship between simple cause and effect. All the areas of the curriculum should be integrated into the planning of materials and activities around the theme selected. These should include: creative expression, through art activities, water, woodwork, blocks, miscellaneous sensory experiences and miscellaneous ideas for small-muscle (fine-motor) development—music, movement, sound and rhythm; science (I prefer to call it *sciencing* at this stage); pre-reading activities such as finger plays, nursery rhymes, poetry, story-telling, puppets, pictures, original stories, etc.; number experiences; outdoor activities to encourage large motor skills; and cooking. The outdoors should be used to promote concept development through activities involving nature, use of traditional games, map drawing, for stimulating imaginative play.

# The Child with a Handicap

*Below is an abstract of an address by Dr. Geoffrey Keys Smith, Director of the Handicapped Children's Centre at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne. Dr. Keys Smith's address opened sessions of the conference under the general heading of "The Child with a Handicap".*

1. ALTHOUGH THE ADDRESS was concerned with the physically handicapped child, it was stressed that most handicapped children at present have multiple handicaps. Only one-fifth of all handicapped children have physical handicaps alone.
2. The importance, causes, problems, outlook and practical handling was discussed of a number of physical handicaps, viz., cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular diseases, limb-deficient children, other orthopaedic conditions, congenital heart disease, and epilepsy.
3. General discussion on:
   (a) Poor socialisation and play-stimulation that results from the lack of mobility or manipulation, and the great importance of pre-school programmes for such children.
   (b) Discussion on the integration of physically handicapped children into normal pre-school centres.
   (c) The great importance of development in the age-group 1-3 years, and the lack of facilities in this age-group for handicapped children.

Basically, such a programme is a parent training programme and stress was laid on the importance of the development of parent resource centres.

## The Hearing-Impaired Child

By D. GWYNN EDWARDS*

I WOULD LIKE to preface my remarks to you today by making the following points:

*Firstly*, when using the term *hearing-impaired*, I include all children who have a loss of hearing, from the partial loss to the most profound loss.

*Secondly*, I do not intend, and indeed cannot, offer specific advice or remedies for the hearing-impaired child. I will, however, attempt to define for you in practical terms the handicap of impaired hearing and the consequences of this handicap upon infant, parents and all those who come into contact with them.

Hearing is present *in utero* and is the first of the distant sensory receptors to function—from approximately the thirteenth week of pregnacy. It is soon apparent to us that the newborn infant is aware of sound in its environment, the auropalprebal reflex is present from birth, and is a gross indicator to us of hearing function to a low neurological level.

The normal child *in utero*, during infancy and early childhood, is literally bathed in sound.

The general sounds of its environment, the specific sounds of the mother's voice, the father's voice, the clatter and chatter of the siblings, the multitude of sounds that are so vital for the promotion of the general psychological well-being of the child and the acquisition of normal speech and language.

This is not so with the hearing-impaired infant—the process is dramatically disjointed—the speech chain is permanently damaged—a vital link in the chain is missing, and the infant has to attempt to come to terms with an environment from which it is in a major part isolated, at least until such time as the handicap is identified.

With the normal child, the existence of hearing presupposes the development of speech—the two are coupled, involving as they do, the development of auditory competence in hearing and listening, and the sophisticated use of speech and language codes.

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Approximately two infants per thousand are born with some degree of impairment to their hearing.

Hearing is the reception of sound by the ear and the transmission of the signal via the central nervous system to the auditory cortex.

Listening is paying attention to what is heard with the object of interpreting meaning — whilst speech itself is much more than just a complex motor activity.

Speech involves an acquired knowledge of language codes, by which words are associated with objects and concepts, a knowledge of syntax and grammar, the continual interaction of stored information and voluntary conscious activity, at the highest levels of the brain.

How the normal child acquires this remarkable linguistic competence by the age of three and a half to four, is still an unexplained mystery. It may well be that we have within us an innate propensity for the acquisition of language that is in some way triggered by our ability to hear. All that we do know for certain is that a child who has defective hearing acquires defective speech.

Let us now consider how this chain—the speech chain—can be broken by an impairment to the auditory mechanism.

As teachers, we are presented with two distinct types of hearing loss in children.

Firstly, conductive hearing losses, which, in the large majority of cases, can be treated medically and which are due to pathologies in the external or middle ear. The most common cause of a conductive loss of hearing is fluid in the middle ear, a fluctuating condition that, if left untreated, can impair the ability to acquire speech and language and require specialist medical intervention.

The second type of loss is a sensori-neural or nerve deafness and applies to pathologies affecting the cochlea or the auditory nerve. Approximately two infants per thousand are born with this type of impairment to their hearing. Unfortunately, this condition cannot be cured by medical intervention and is caused by a large number of pre-natal, peri-natal, or post-natal factors, maternal rubella being perhaps the most widely publicised. Once the condition has been identified, usually between the sixth and eighth month, hearing aids are fitted and the appropriate management is initiated.

Briefly let us consider the way in which these two losses can inhibit a child's ability to hear. Put simply, a conductive loss dampens the auditory acuity of the child. It requires the speaker to raise his voice level in order that the child can hear distinctly, and as has been indicated, the fluctuating nature and general responsiveness to medical intervention rarely requires the use of a hearing aid. We are all aware that when we have a severe head cold, our hearing deteriorates. Remember that this happens to the small child from time to time during the year—guard against it, not by raising your voice level, although this may indeed be necessary for a limited period, but by bringing the necessity of having to do this to the attention of the parents or the appropriate medical authority. It is now established that at any one time, 25 per cent of children under the age of eight, can have some degree of a conductive loss which, if severe enough, is an educational handicap under normal classroom conditions.

The effects of a sensori-neural loss of hearing range from the mild or partial loss of hearing to the near-total or profound loss, when even the loudest shout close to the ear is not heard.

It can be a flat loss of hearing across the entire range of frequencies required for normal speech and language, in which case the child will hear most sounds of speech but they will be distorted, even with a hearing aid.

It may, on the other hand, be a high-frequency loss of hearing, in which case, as speech has low-frequency vowels and high-frequency consonants, the child will only hear with some clarity aided vowels but highly distorted consonants, therefore producing distorted speech and language, even with a hearing aid.

In my personal experience as a teacher, a senior advisory teacher of the hearing-impaired, and as an educational audiologist, I have found amongst my colleagues who have a hearing-impaired child in their class, a basic misunderstanding as to what a hearing aid actually does. A hearing aid is, by modern standards, a relatively simple transistorised device that enables speech and everyday sounds to be amplified. Although we are now able to adjust aids in order that the response approximates to the particular loss present, the hearing aid is still an imperfect instrument that tends to amplify and distort in an indiscriminate fashion. By this I mean that we, with normal hearing, have a remarkable capacity to be able to select and monitor what we want to listen to at any one particular moment. My wife will willingly testify to my ability to do this when reading the paper at the breakfast table every morning. The hearing-impaired child in your class does not have this ability; the aid distorts and amplifies all sounds within reach, with little or no regard for an auditory perspective—the sounds of imperfect speech patterns and all the chatter and clatter of the peer group. The simple fact is that a hearing aid is an aid to hearing—nothing more and nothing less—and if that hearing is imperfect, then the aid given is also imperfect. A hearing aid does not cure deafness for an infant or child, and it should be clearly understood that because a child wears an aid, he does not therefore acquire normal hearing.

In attempting to compensate for these factors, you will try and ensure that the hearing aid is working, a simple daily routine that is often overlooked in schools for the hearing-impaired; that the child is near you and always in a position to see you clearly when a story is told, instructions given or comment solicited; that those few seconds of extra time are given to repeat a sentence in order that it may be understood—never talk to a hearing-impaired child in an artificial or stilted manner, do not use single words or short phrases when you can use natural flowing speech and language. This, after all, is the normal thing to do, and is what the child is relying upon in order to glean those auditory and visual clues so necessary for understanding. Your visiting teacher of the hearing-impaired will help you in these matters. Liaise with the parents; such a period is as traumatic for them as for their child. Seek advice from your Health and Education Departments, many of whom now hold in-service courses for teachers with handicapped pupils placed in a normal setting. Increasingly, over the past few years, it has become the policy of Health and Education Departments to assimilate hearing-impaired children into normal school environments with the declared aim of providing them with as near normal an education as possible. This policy places demands upon all concerned—the teachers, the parents, and most of all, the child itself.

Such a course of action can only be truly successful for the child if adequate specialist support is given. This entails an investment in the early detection and diagnosis of the handicap; the immediate fitting of aids powerful enough to exploit the last vestige of the infant's residual hearing; meaningful parental guidance, which encourages to the full the child's exposure to an amplified auditory experience during its waking hours; a specialist pre-school visiting teacher service providing help within the home setting, and providing a liaison between the parents and the pre-school; and specialist teachers visiting the child at the pre-school, in order to provide the specialist help every teacher feels is needed, if the child is to make adequate social, emotional, and educational progress.

All too often we have made, and continue to make, the mistake of raising parental expectations by placing handicapped children in a normal educational setting from an early age, and then by failing to provide adequate back-up services, dooming that child and family to disappointment, placing the blame for failure upon the child and not upon ourselves as professionals.

The point I would stress as strongly as I can is that the assimilation of the handicapped child into a normal society is long overdue, but that it can only succeed if that process is co-ordinated from the earliest months, and its full implications are clearly recognised in terms of an ongoing commitment from us, the professionals, towards the child and family for the whole of the school life.

# Speech Difficulties in the Pre-School Child

By BRONWYN PARRY-FIELDER*

THE TERM "speech difficulties" is misleading; what we are actually interested in is the child's ability to communicate, and even more pertinently, his ability to communicate verbally, although some of the speech disorders discussed later involve aspects of communication other than verbal.

Verbal communication is basically what separates us from other animals. Although researchers have been able to teach chimpanzees to communicate their needs through sign language, to formulate sentences through this medium, and to read and write with plastic symbols, as yet no one has been able to teach chimpanzees to articulate functional speech. Verbal communication is our most highly developed skill, and an essential aspect of intellectual, emotional and social functioning. It is reliant on language — the understanding and use of words, and rules for combining them. Speech involves the production of sounds which make up words, by movements of the tongue, lips, jaw and palate. Speech, although not essential, is certainly the most convenient and efficient method of communicating.

When looking at the complexities of acquiring this skill, it is remarkable that the great proportion of children succeed in learning to speak. It is a skill dependent on every facet of development and functioning—physical, intellectual, social and emotional, and a breakdown in any one will take its toll. In order to communicate verbally, a child needs adequate hearing, he needs to be intact neurologically, he needs satisfactory emotional development, a stimulating environment and a physically intact articulatory mechanism. Because of this complexity and vulnerability, verbal communication is often the first area to reflect a problem. Many retarded, disturbed, brain-damaged or deaf children may first appear with speech as a presenting problem. The pre-school child will commonly present not saying enough, due to delayed speech development, or with speech which is not acceptable, due to defective articulation, disturbed language structure, disrupted fluency or stuttering or abnormal voice quality. The speech therapist's task is then to take a history, make an assessment, and decide which cases should be referred on for further diagnosis and management.

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In order to develop verbal communication, the child needs satisfactory emotional development. Communicating is relating to people, conveying needs, sharing thoughts and feelings. This first occurs with the mother figure. "Of particular importance is the feeding situation—a seemingly highly vulnerable area for many children with later speech problems. Here not only is the child deriving pleasure from oral activity, but he is also using the same apparatus he later uses for articulation—all this taking place in the context of a warm physical relationship with the mother." (Edgell, 1975.)

Researchers such as Colwyn Trevarthen, in their observations of infants, have discovered that infants of a few weeks of age were showing signs of intention to speak. They described in two-month-old babies what they called "pre-speech", which, because of the context in which it occurs and its form, indicates that it is a rudimentary form of speaking by movements of lips and tongue. These distinctive movements are often made by infants without sound, and at other times young babies are very vocal, making a variety of cooing sounds as they move mouth and tongue. Also associated with pre-speech are distinctive hand-waving movements that are developmentally related to the gestures of adults.

This infant communication depends on a number of special adaptations in the mother's behaviour—unconscious alterations in the way the mother would normally communicate to another adult. These changes are in terms of slower, more emphatic but gentle movements and "baby talk". The mothers show phrasing in their speech, allowing the baby to take his turn. Much of the behaviour of the baby expressing excitement or impulse to act is followed closely by the mother, and, indeed, her skill and understanding of what the infant is doing enable her to often obtain a synchrony of their acts.

"Discovery of embryonic speaking in the social animation of infants nearly two years before they use the words to communicate reinforces the view of psycholinguists nowadays that language is embedded in an innate context of non-verbal communication, by which intention and experience are transmitted from person to person." (Trevarthen, 1974.)

There is a developing opinion amongst psycholinguists that mothers using baby talk—or, in other words, tailoring the sounds or language they use to the child's developing linguistic competence — are playing an important role in the development of their child's speech. I wonder whether mothers who insist on talking to their infants and young children as they would to another adult may perhaps cause their children to develop language more slowly.

Several studies have been published recently, including those done by Toni Cross (Melbourne University) which have documented a number of features of mothers' language to young children which are not present in their speech to adults. This type of language which mothers use has been given such names as *Motherese, tailored input,* or *base language.* It has been found to be a universal phenomenon. It has been described as a highly repetitive, structurally simple language form containing a very restricted vocabulary. It is fluent; clear speech pauses come between constituents. It has heavy gestural components and only deals with the here and now. It tends to remove words which would occur before the main verb, e.g. *want an apple, go to grandma's now.* It is obviously ideal for teaching language, especially when considering young children's limited memory spans—they really find it difficult to cope with typical adult speech, which is rapid and non-fluent, many of the sentences used being interrupted, revised or never completed. This language form seems to be natural and unconscious with most mothers, just as does the participation of mothers in their child's pre-speech, babbling, etc. The children appear to control the complexity of the mother's language. They can get their mothers to simplify their language with an *uh!* or a blank look. This base-language code grows as the child's language develops.

These facts about the type of speech generally used by mothers, have implications for all people working with young chidren, particularly in day-care settings, and with children who present with delayed language development. It is important that those who deal with such children—speech therapists, kindergarten teachers, etc.—limit their speech to a suitable level for the child. For instance, if a child uses single words, the mother usually limits her speech to 3-4 words at a time, if the child uses 2-3-word combinations the mother uses 5-6-word combinations.

I recall one five-year-old girl attending a VISCA centre, who had severe problems in developing verbal communication. She had a small vocabulary of single words and a few phrases, and her understanding of speech was at about a two-year level. Yet her performance skills and her play which mirrored in minute detail the everyday things that went on about her, caused the teachers to instinctively talk to her like a five-year-old, rather than a two-year-old—her understanding level.

Delayed speech development may be due to many causes. The child may have a hearing loss. Even a partial or fluctuating loss can inhibit language development and cause defective articulation.

Retarded children will often present with delayed language development. However, the diagnostic process will generally reveal that the delay is at the same level or just slightly below other areas of functioning. Unless there is a significant discrepancy, treatment can achieve relatively little. The therapist can, however, work through the parents, helping them to stimulate their child's development, using appropriate materials and setting realistic goals.

Speech delay for emotional reasons is generally accompanied by other behaviour problems. "These children are often slow in starting to use words, building up a vocabulary, and in acquiring grammatical rules. Others may show their reaction to stress through disrupted fluency or periods of mutism. The angry withdrawn child may use silence as a weapon. Immature children cling to earlier forms—*moo-cow, gee-gee, me want nana, me go bye-bye.* Severely disturbed children frequently fail to speak at all, or if they do, it can often be used inappropriately and not for interpersonal communication. Attempts by parents to change communication patterns in this group are largely fruitless, and treatment of the symptom is not effective unless the underlying emotional problem is handled." (Cynthia Edgell, 1975.)

Children with minimal brain damage, often with few, if any, neurological signs, are highly at risk for language and intellectual involvement, and this frequently leads to later problems in reading and spelling. They commonly present as being anxious to communicate, frequently using concrete gesture, and are generally very frustrated by their communication problem. They have a limited vocabulary, and are very slow to combine words. This pattern is in contrast to other skills, which are often commensurate with their age level. Speech-therapy intervention is indicated as early as possible.

Sometimes it is difficult to separate the child with specific language deficits from the autistic child. Some do not understand speech, gestures, facial expression or miming. They have communication deficits involving the non-verbal aspects of communication as well as speech. One small boy, aged four when he first presented to me, echoed back everything I said, meaninglessly, even down to the "good boy" and 'm's, and it was no good using gesture as this was repeated back also. Yet in other aspects of functioning where he could use his visual and kinaesthetic skills—for instance with formboards—he was functioning at or above his age level.

An essential aspect of language development is that expressive speech tends to lag behind comprehension until well after school entry. At no time is this more evident than the period from approximately 2½-4 years, when the child is first learning to communicate verbally. He has to recall the appropriate words and then select the rules for combining them into sentences. It is small wonder that he hesitates, stumbles, prolongs and repeats. This is, in fact, a normal aspect of language development, "normal non-fluency", which to some degree never leaves us, and is most apparent at times of pressure, stress, or fatigue.

One of the *many* theories about stuttering is that this essentially normal behaviour is labelled as stuttering by the anxious parents. They in turn produce anxiety and tension about speech in the child—changing the normal non-fluency into a primary stutter. The characteristics of primary stuttering—hesitations, prolongations, and repetitions—are no different from those of normal non-fluency except that there is now awareness on the child's part.

This awareness, added to the parents' concern and well-intentioned efforts to help, only serves to make the child more anxious about his speech behaviour and endeavour to control it. This leads to more severe secondary stuttering. Some children undoubtedly seem more non-fluent than others, and some can suddenly develop a stutter as a result of trauma or stress. Speech therapists generally handle those cases of normal non-fluency and stuttering in pre-school children by counselling the parents as to the probable cause, and advise them against attempting to help with suggestions for achieving fluency—take a deep breath, etc. Rather, they are asked to listen to what the child is saying instead of how he is saying it. The child's acceptance of his own speech patterns depends largely on his parents' attitudes. The parents are encouraged to share such activities as reading, looking at picture books, with the child, to foster a pleasurable attitude to speaking, and also to develop the child's vocabulary and ability to express himself. If the symptoms still persist, then referral is recommended so that secondary stuttering symptoms do not become a well-established behaviour pattern. It is interesting that at this stage where the child may be showing signs of normal non-fluency, he is also starting to develop a type of language play, which I'm sure you will all recognise. It consists of nonsense words, considerable rhyming and repetition of sentences varying slightly on each repetition.

E.g. "Oh yeah, I forgot pot."
"When I'm finished my bath tath."
"Dirty old rat the cat is pat."

Psychologists point out the inevitable anal and phallic themes of this language play; however, some theorists feel that these word plays amongst children may perform an important function. They might be a means of practising and improving some aspects of fluency and language function.

By the time a child enters school, he should be able to understand all that is said to him, have a fairly wide vocabulary, and have mastered most of the basic grammatical rules. In addition, his speech should be intelligible to others, though not necessarily perfect. Parents' anxiety levels regarding their children's articulatory difficulties vary greatly—some expect their pre-schoolers to have perfect articulation. One authority has stated that children are entitled to speak like little children without having adults consider them defective. Not until the age of seven is the child expected to have mastered the use of all consonants in spontaneous connected speech; yet most have done so well before this.

Among the causes of defective articulation are hearing loss, neuro-motor dysfunction, structural abnormalities such as cleft palate or paresis of the palate, malocclusion, or rarely tongue-tie. One of the most commonly presenting speech problems in young children is defective articulation with no obvious cause. These children have adequate hearing, a normal articulatory mechanism, their understanding and use of language is within normal limits and they can frequently imitate all consonants. In spite of these factors their spontaneous speech can be quite unintelligible. This is termed dyslalia. "The common characteristic of the vast majority of this group is the pattern of their emotional functioning. They use their immature speech as a way of asserting their dependency and retaining closeness to mother—she nearly always understands. This immaturity is often reflected in the retention of some earlier grammatical forms (especially *me* for *I*) and the babyish intonation patterns of the younger child. In addition there may be other signs of emotional disturbance, eneuresis, eating or sleeping problems." (Edgell, 1975.) Management of these children is usually through parental counselling—helping them to encourage their children to be more independent. Entry into kindergarten or school frequently aids maturation and causes some improvement, though many require direct treatment later.

If the pre-school child is in therapy, we often have the mother present, so that we are in fact training her to be the child's therapist. I feel that it is very important that parents should understand the nature of their child's problems, and feel competent to help alleviate them, and also that they be involved in all decisions about their child's management, thus helping them to accept their child's problems and feel that they can cope with them.

There is clearly a wide range of communication problems in the pre-school child, all of which need careful elucidation and often different management. Parental counselling is important to alleviate the anxiety that is naturally felt. Often parents are concerned about how the child with a speech difficulty will be accepted in a pre-school setting. My limited field study regarding this question would suggest that the speech difficulty as such does not cause great problems—their peers are much more accepting of such things than adults. Because of the complex nature of the process of verbal communication, many children present with delays or difficulties at some stage; yet most of these children improve spontaneously with maturation. Our task is, then, through observation and assessment, to determine those children for whom communication may present real problems in the future, so that early management can prevent serious disadvantage.

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## Visual Defects

By Prof. GORDON STANLEY*

THIS TALK focuses on some aspects of visual perception relevant to children with visual defects, but does not deal exclusively with problems of the partially sighted. Given that visual defects are diagnosed in the pre-school child, then the pre-school experience should be directed towards providing those skills most closely associated with reading and writing. There is considerable evidence to suggest that perceptual training which focuses on pattern recognition in general will not help a great deal. Typically children with visual defects require a great deal of specific training directed towards the discrimination of letters and words.

Our research programme at the University of Melbourne has thrown up some interesting findings with respect to the relationship between visual skills and later reading. Children who scored best on the visual perceptual tests on the Illinois Test of Psycholingustic Abilities at age four were the children who had greatest difficulty at reading when at age eight. Presumably children who are above average at certain perceptual discrimination tasks rely on these skills and sometimes fail to develop the habit of attending to the linguistic nature of the material being presented to them. Some recent work in the United Kingdom has shown that children using beginning readers without pictorial information on each page learn to read faster than children having readers with the standard illustration on each page. It appears that children presented with the pictures use this information as clues to "guess" the words, so do not develop the habit of associating the letter combinations with the words. Pictures in beginning readers have value to stimulate interest in the story, but should not be as directly related to the text as they usually are.

Given my assertion that emphasis should be on specific training, what aspects should be covered in such training?

1. Training should begin with easily discriminated letters, for example, linear versus curved letters, *H* versus *O*, etc. More complex discriminations (e.g.

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*P, R*) should be introduced only after mastery of the simple.

2. Touch should be used as well as vision. However, tracing is much better than free exploration of the figure. The tracing pattern should be that which is to be used later when the child writes the letter. This tracing will help build up the motor schemata necessary for writing and will aid the overall memory process. If the motor aspect is not co-ordinated with the visual, then the child will start to develop habits which will interfere with his later learning.

Often children with perceptual defects show poor attention. They show rapid scanning movements which make instruction difficult. Often the pre-school environment is a perceptual disaster area for them. There is too much visual information for them to process and their scanning movements keep picking up information irrelevant to any particular instruction they need. Such children often have difficulty discriminating a few basic features of a room and find it very confusing when confronted by the vast array of pictures, children's drawings, play materials, etc., commonly displayed in pre-schools. They will need to work in an area in which there are few visual stimuli present, so that they can learn to identify the criticial features of objects, pictures, letters, etc., without interference from competing stimuli.

## Mental Handicaps and Behaviour Problems

By HEATHER HEWITT*

THE DIFFICULTIES experienced by children with minimal cerebral dysfunction were discussed and the proposition put that a more appropriate term for describing these children would be that of "specific learning disabilities", the latter making no reference to any implied aetiology of an organic nature and throwing the responsibility for management firmly on the shoulders of the educator.

Behaviours were categorised as follows:

1. Inadequate Impulse Control.
2. Inadequate Integral Function.
3. Deceptive Self-Concept and Narcissistic Hypersensitivity.

and the following breakdown discussed:

1. *Inadequate Impulse Control.*
    - (i) Hyperactivity.
    - (ii) Distractibility.
    - (iii) Motor disinhibition.
    - (v) Perseveration.

One explanation proposed for these behaviours was delayed figure/ground perception. Suggestions regarding educational management in the pre-school settings were discussed.

2. *Inadequate Integral Function.*
    - (i) Figure/ground perception.
    - (ii) Visual motor perception.
    - (iii) Perception of position in space.
    - (iv) Perceptual constancy.
    - (v) Perception of spatial relationships.

The difficulties which these children may experience in the pre-school and infantroom settings were outlined and assessment and remediation in three settings discussed.

3. *Defective Self Concept.*

The ways in which these children were likely to perceive the world. The negative feedback they frequently received from people important to their development of self was discussed. It was proposed that one of the most important roles of the pre-school teacher was to act as an ego bank for these bankrupt children in order to prevent them becoming drop-outs from school, a system which they might never drop into because the roots of these problems lay in the deprivation of their pre-school experiences.

## Film and Video Session

DURING THIS SESSION, two films and a videotape were shown and discussed briefly.

Films were *Shelly*, which highlights the importance of stimulation of blind children, and *Treetops*, describing a kindergarten for deaf and hearing children together.

The videotape, *Just Like Me*, was specially prepared for the Conference. It shows ten children with different handicaps attending normal pre-school centres. Besides showing the way the children with their special needs are accepted and integrated into the group, the tape also shows parents, their attitudes to visiting teachers and support they gain from them. The tape has a sound-track which includes a brief commentary on the handicaps. Notes were available to augment this.

Both tape and notes are now available for borrowing or purchase from the A.P.A. Victorian Branch.

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# Focusing on the Essentials

By Prof. LUCILE LINDBERG*

THROUGHOUT THE U.S.A. there is a call for accountability. And why shouldn't there be! Millions of tax dollars are being spent for teachers' salaries, for equipment and supplies, for the bricks and mortar that go into buildings. Newspaper headlines scream out that children can't read, that they have no backgrounds in numbers, that spelling is abominable. "Where is our money going?" they ask. "Let's do away with the frills. Let's get back to the essentials."

We who teach young children should be held accountable. Not only are we spending the money, but, of much more importance, we are controlling children's time and activities for one year, two years, or even three years in some cases. Parents and others in the community have a right to expect that children will be gaining the basic skills they need now and in the future, that they will be developing the foundations which make possible continued pursuit of knowledge, intelligent investigation of ideas and scientific inquiry.

We need to examine what we are doing to see if we are making use of the knowledge we have of how children grow and develop, how learning takes place. If we see that our children are sitting much of the time, then it would seem that we are forgetting that boys and girls learn with their whole beings, that muscle and bones need to move.

If we find ourselves telling children exactly what to do, could it be that we are depending upon rote learning, ignoring the idea that the ways in which children learn in their early years are the ways in which they will continue, and that we may be cutting off the very scientific approaches which we expect them to use later? If we prepare exercises telling children what and how to classify, match, pattern or sequence, aren't we discouraging them from searching for their own categories, finding interesting new relationships and making exciting discoveries? If we define the tasks children will do, are they setting their own challenges and learning an inner motivation?

What does asking a child to colour within the lines, lines which we set out for him, do to his really learning what boundaries are? To his desire to go beyond the boundaries? Is he developing an inner discipline when his activities are regimented and he is taught to follow directions? If all of the boys and girls are asked to do the same things, are we forgetting that children grow at different rates and have many styles of learning? When we teach children words out of context, are they missing the richness of the language?

When we engage in language exercises intended to help children learn to read a bit earlier, are they missing the opportunity to discover what language is, how it is structured? "Just teach them to read. They can learn to think later" is a frequent demand.

But how and under what conditions children learn to read makes a difference in the ways they approach reading in later years and the attitudes they will have toward reading.

The tastes of a lifetime are being developed. The quality of the language in the books we read to them makes a difference, as does the type of poetry they hear. Given good books suitable to their age-levels, children will demand the best and won't tolerate shoddy literature in the future. Are we giving care not only to what we read to children, but to the kinds of feelings we reflect as we read?

Knowledge is expanding at a rapid rate. There is much to learn. We can't know what the future is. We can be certain that the knowledge needed by today's boys and girls will be very different from that needed by our generation.

We cannot afford to teach one concept at a time. No matter how rapidly we work, no matter how much pressure we place on ourselves and others, we can never develop all of the concepts which will be needed.

Because we cannot do everything, we must make certain that what we focus on are the essentials. There are basic skills which, when mastered, make possible a never-ending source of knowledge. While there are many of these skills, or perhaps we might say processes, we shall look at five here.

Observation is a basic. Children are curious and we can enhance this curiosity if we ourselves are observers and permit time for the materials and phenomena in the environment to be examined with care. A child on hands and knees follows an ant on the playground, giving his complete attention, seemingly oblivious to the passing of time. Only later does he begin to talk of what he has seen. Questions and comments aren't needed, but a listening ear makes what he is saying seem even more important and he elaborates on what he has observed.

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Children coming into one room in the morning often go over to the flower-pots by the windows. They wish to see how much their plants have grown. They measure, they compare, they refer to yesterday and what they saw then. They note the leaf unfurling and peer to see what is inside. They feel the dryness or dampness of the soil.

Awareness of what is going on about children is heightened as they become more and more keen in their observations. Their questions multiply, their involvement with their environment is intensified.

The ability to discover relationships is another skill which is essential if an individual is to either make a contribution to disciplines which already exist or help create new ones. Knowledge is created as known materials and ideas are organised in new ways. Children seek orderliness. Given the opportunities, they create strange and wonderful categories and note relationships which the teacher would probably never see. With experience, their systems become increasingly intricate. A handful of "stuff" collected on the playground becomes a series of piles—sticks, stones, leaves. It is immediately reorganised into a stick, a stone, a leaf, in each pile. Then the sticks are placed in sequence from longest to shortest and the leaves are put in a pile putting the largest at the bottom. The child creates exercises which go far beyond those which an adult might call forth in directing a child what to do. And the systems are his, and he begins to feel himself not just as a follower of systems, but as a creator of systems. Life can be ordered and he can be a force in doing it.

Problem-solving processes are essential if we are to have quality in living. Our boys and girls need the opportunity to solve problems, but even more important is that they discover their own problems; problems which are important to them. "How can we get another row of blocks on the top of this building? What shall I do with this drip of paint? How can I get to the top of the climbing apparatus?" are some of the problems they pose.

Three- and four-year-old children, given the opportunity, will engage in every step of problem-solving processes. Some are more verbal than others. They don't necessarily deal with every problem in its entirety, but many of them they do. As one observes, very clear defining of problems can be heard. Very often hypotheses are stated loudly and emphatically. Alternative ways of approaching the problem are considered. Results are evaluated. As children have experience, they become more and more careful about their generalisations.

Skills can be developed in decision-making processes. The quality of our lives is dependent upon the kinds of choices we make. And we are making choices even when we decide not to do so, as we are making the choice of having someone else decide for us. Certainly the key to democracy is in who makes the decisions and how they are made.

With our young children we give freedom to choose. But in order to choose they must have something from which to choose. If we don't have enough activities or materials available, boys and girls don't have really much choice. If we put out too much, the clutter is likely to be so great that children do not distinguish the figure from the ground. Sometimes they move too rapidly from one thing to another when too much is available.

Collage tables are one illustration of this. We collect a great variety of paper, cloth, cardboard, boxes, string, seeds, and then we put it all out at once. Children given a limited variety of materials to paste really have a chance to choose thoughtfully what they will paste and where they will place each piece on the paper.

As we give children an opportunity to make choices we are teaching valuing. He chooses. He has his reasons for the choice. We accept what he has chosen as being right for him at this moment. Quietly we look with him at the piece of pink paper he has discovered. Often we say nothing. Sometimes we might say, "You like that pink, don't you?"

He likes. It is all right for him to like. Later we may say, "What do you like about it?", developing an awareness that he has his own reasons for valuing.

Knowing what values are and having an opportunity to develop his own, a child recognises that others have their values, some of which he, too, will adopt.

Risk-taking is an important aspect in all of life. He can learn to use judgement in what it is sensible to take risks about and what is foolish behaviour. If a child has learned to make these choices, will he be so likely to ruin the engine of an automobile, or take needless chances with nature? We must take risks. We move forward through unknown ventures, but it is the calculated risks that produce results.

With young children we have wonderful opportunities to develop thoughtful approaches. We watch a four-year-old. He wishes to put one more block on top of his high structure. Dare he take the chance? He looks it over, tests the base, decides to try it. The whole thing crashes. He lost on that decision. Next time he will look at still more possibilities.

Skill in communication is required if a child is to let others know who he is and he in turn is to find out who they are. And much of life is involved with exactly that. He communicates with words, but he communicates with paint and clay and movement as well. A child returns from a trip. At the easel he paints not what he saw but his feelings about what he saw and heard and touched and smelled and tasted. It is a statement of where he is now. It is an internalisation of his recent experience as it is incorporated with his past experience. And he intensifies his experience as he communicates his feelings with brush and words. Through song and dance children develop vehicles whereby they can endure the trials they face.

Given basic skills and processes such as we have described, in an environment where children feel comfortable they develop love of learning, a sense of competence to take their responsibilities as members of their society.

We cannot teach these skills as isolated bits. They must be learned in a context important to the child if they are to become a part of his way of life. Play is a vehicle for every skill which is needed. As a child plays, he sets his own challenges, he tests himself, he develops trust in his own abilities. In a play setting a child can experiment with many ways of dealing with others. In play all of life is integrated and inner controls can be developed. Each child develops as a powerful person, a person who reaches out to read, to write, to spell, to communicate in effective ways.

Parents and public have a right to hold us accountable, accountable for helping children develop the basic skills they need. As pre-shool teachers, we have a tremendous responsibility. The future of our civilisation may be in our hands. Among the three- and four-year-olds in our groups are the leaders of tomorrow. Will they be careful observers who see many relationships and inter-relationships among both materials and persons? Will they be problem-solvers who make thoughtful decisions and communicate their ideas in clear and forceful ways? The emphases we place in our work with them will make a difference.

# Pre-School Education and Ethnic Minorities

## Immigrant Sub-Cultures in Australia

By LORRAINE RIACH*

THIS PAPER investigates some aspects of the culture of European ethnic groups in Australia. Particularly it addresses itself to some of the social implications of a multicultural society for those who are members of ethnic groups, for multiracial schools and for those who teach in such schools.

I do not want to introduce into this paper a long list of statistics, but I believe that it is important to keep two in particular in mind:

1. An ever-increasing proportion of immigrants to Australia come from Southern Europe and the Middle East, in marked contrast to the years before the last decade, when for most of Australia's Anglo history newcomers were from the United Kingdom, and in contrast to the years 1945-65 when those who were not of United Kingdom origin were frequently of North and East European origin. In the last decade a distinct change in the pattern of ethnic origin of people coming to Australia has taken place.
2. There is a widespread agreement that by the end of this decade twenty to twenty-five per cent. of children of school age in urban Australia will either not have been born in Australia or will be of parents who were not born in Australia.

Because this paper is presented from a sociological perspective, I would like to spend a short time reorienting you, or perhaps orienting you for the first time, to that perspective. Sociologists are prone to see the human individual as the product of society rather than the creator of society. This is, they see one becoming what one is and developing a self-image through social experiences and in particular through the socialising processes of early childhood. The socialising processes of childhood usually take place within the family of origin and the family is itself a reflector of the beliefs, the attitudes, the behaviour, the language and the history of the society or sub sector of society in which it is located.

George Mead described the process by which one comes to share a common social meaning with others and by which one comes to develop a concept of oneself in the following words:

> . . . Much of language is factual, simply identifying objects about which people communicate and in time dog, cat and cow come to have the same factual meaning for the child that they do for adults. However through language the child also learns the attitudes and emotions with which objects are viewed by his parents and others . . . language transmits not only names of objects but appropriate or prescribed attitudes toward the objects named . . . for instance factually cow means the same to the Hindu child as an American child but to the Hindu child the meaning of cow also includes attitudes of reverence and respect . . . and just as the child learns to take the same attitudes toward objects in his environment that others take toward them, so he learns to take the same attitudes toward himself that others take toward him . . . by thinking about himself in the light of the attitudes of others toward him the individual becomes self-conscious and begins to acquire a social self. (Broom, L., and Selznick, 1975.)

When we look at the child being initiated into a world of social meanings that he shares with others in his social group, we are looking at an enculturation process, for culture refers to all the shared ways of thinking, believing, perceiving and evaluating that emerge in the course of group experience and that are transmitted from one generation to another.

A group that shares ideas, ideals, values and symbols may be referred to as an ethnic group, for a ethnic group is one with a common cultural tradition and one which provides a sense of identity for its members, and a feeling of belonging.

Language, religion, and/or a common history can provide the basis of ethnic attachment, but we must be very conscious, if we are to develop a sympathetic understanding of ethnic differences, that a shared nationality is not synonymous with a shared ethnicity. E.g., *Yugoslavians* share a nationality but they do not share a common culture. *Anglo-Australians* share a common culture with people of British origin who are not Australian nationals. Anglo-Australians and European Australians share a nationality but not a common culture.

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Anglo-Australians, as hosts to newcomers to this country, have been guilty of two gross simplifications:

(a) an assumption that migrants, I suppose because of their migrant status, are a homogeneous group;

(b) an assumption that a shared nationality implies a shared culture.

Daniel Lerner (Lerner, D., 1958) suggests that an attempt to understand newcomers to a country according to their national origin does not get us very far; he suggests, rather, that we ignore the national origins of our new settlers and think of them fitting one of three descriptions:

*Moderns*—newcomers who are already experienced in urban living, committed to Western concepts of change and social mobility, to nuclear family patterns, to a marriage system based on personal relations, to a notion of some equality of the sexes, to a rationalist, secular outlook.

*Traditionals*—newcomers from peasant communities; they are resistant to change, are committed to extended family patterns, to arranged marriages, to powerful grandparents, to clearly defined and differentiated sex roles, and have no interest in international activities.

*Transitionals*—newcomers who have some commitment to change; who have an interest in government, who strive for a better standard of living, higher social status and education for their children; but who simultaneously have a high degree of adherence to traditional and extended family patterns as outlined above, to traditional sex roles and to traditional attitudes towards authority structures.

I would suggest that a high percentage of newcomers from the U.K., from Northern and from Eastern Europe could be referred to as moderns. Some are, of course, transitionals and I would suggest that a high percentage of newcomers from Southern Europe and from Turkey and the Middle East could be referred to as transitionals, a few, especially the elderly and some of the women, could be traditionals, and a proportion will naturally best be described as moderns.

Thus, as the composition of new settlers to Australia has changed, we have moved from a situation where a high percentage of newcomers were moderns to a situation where a high percentage of newcomers are likely to be best described as transitionals.

I would like to examine the situation of those of our new settlers who may be described as transitionals, or traditionals, for it is obvious that they and their children will experience a greater degree of social dislocation due to their relocation in Australia.

## LET US ASK WHY THESE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO MIGRATE TO AUSTRALIA.

In doing so, let us return to some of the characteristics of the transitionals. In particular, they are characterised by a striving for an improvement in the material life conditions and life chances of their children, and simultaneously by a continuing adherence to traditional family patterns, social roles, and concepts of authority relationships.

Not surprisingly, studies show a wide range of reasons given by newcomers to Australia, but overwhelmingly newcomers from Southern Europe, Turkey and the Middle East place high on their list of explanations that they came to Australia in the belief that, in contrast to their country of origin, Australia offered them an opportunity to economic advancement and especially it offered their children, through education, social and economic mobility that they could not experience elsewhere. That many migrants come with high expectations of what our schools are going to do for their children is supported in the research of Taft, R. (1975), Leathart, D. (1972), and Claydon, L. (La Trobe Task Force).

In the words of Ronald Taft (1975), "migrant parents and children express high aspirations for education with the aspirations of parents being in advance of their children". Aspirations were often ahead of educational intentions, indicating that many of the parents he observed had little notion of the path that led to a professional occupation in Australia, but they expressed the expectation that their children would achieve professional occupational status.

Taft believes that parental aspirations were often quite unrealistic in terms of the likely numbers of openings. I would like to add here that, by and large, whatever word was being used, the immigrant parents were most likely expressing high aspirations for their sons rather than their daughters.

Although the move is made in the expectation that public education in Australia will facilitate the upward social mobility of their children, parents express little wish to adopt a whole new way of life or to reject their own, and as the Brotherhood of St. Laurence (1971) study summed up the situation: In the main our immigrants from Southern Europe "are simple unsophisticated people whose comprehension of the complexities of the social change they have set in motion by emigrating is likely to be slight".

## WHAT ARE LIKELY TO BE THE EARLY EXPERIENCES AND REACTIONS OF THE TRANSITIONAL IMMIGRANT TO URBAN AUSTRALIA?

I believe that one would answer this question comprehensively by looking at five dimensions of the new life:

1. Language acquisition.
2. Attitudes demonstrated by the host society.

3. The economic sphere.
4. The new customs, folkways and moves.
5. The impact upon the self-identity of the newcomer.

1. *Language.* Anything that I could say about the necessity to acquire English and the difficulties inherent in the acquisition would be trite. Not because this aspect of the new life is unimportant—its fundamental importance could not be denied by anyone—but rather because the importance of acquiring the means of communication used by the dominant culture has all been said before and said so much better than I could say it. I will say only this:

To stress only the importance of language acquisition is a gross over-simplification. Language and culture are inseparable—language is the medium of communication, but culture is the content of communication.

2. *Attitudes demonstrated by the host society.* Aloofness, misunderstanding, prejudice—call it what you will—the European immigrant to Australia has usually experienced it in some form.

Alan Matheson, Associate Director of the Ecumenical Migration Centre in Richmond, uses Humphrey McQueen's words:

> Australia has avoided the necessity for an articulation of its racism, but to be different in Australia is to feel excluded, isolated and powerless. In a sense to be different is to be denied existence. (Matheson, A., 1975.)

Jean Martin, former Professor of Sociology at La Trobe, says Anglo-Australian attitudes to immigrants are based on six essential beliefs. They are:

1. Australians are generous-hearted and open-minded towards anyone who shares their central values.
2. The one salient feature that all migrants have in common is that they are lucky to be here.
3. The existing Australian social structure can and will incorporate newcomers without undue strain and without undergoing radical change itself.
4. National groups, as any forms of organisation among migrants were called, are unnecessary and a potential threat to smooth incorporation.
5. The process of incorporation involves the individual migrant assimilating into the Australian way of life.
6. It would be contrary to the prevailing egalitarian values and detrimental to assimilation for migrants to be given unique privileges or consideration of any kind. (Martin, J., 1972.)

And in the words of an anonymous Italian:

> Australians laugh at us because we are emotional people. They think we are here to steal their jobs, their money and their women and everywhere they discriminate against us.

I would not want to suggest that all newcomers to Australia are badly treated, but in my research for this paper I could not find any support for the argument that the above are not representative statements about attitudes of the average Anglo-Australian.

3. *The economic experience of the newcomer.* In 1971 Ronald Henderson's study of poverty in Melbourne showed that while 9 per cent. of Australian-born citizens were below what he designated the poverty line, 23 per cent. of recently arrived Greek migrants and 30 per cent. of recently arrived Italian migrants were below the poverty line.

For many immigrants from Southern Europe:

—expectations of high earnings were quickly shattered;

—often the father took or takes two jobs in order to compensate;

—when the wife also joins the work-force it is usually the first time in her life that she has done so;

—the dual-worker family, working long hours brings a sharp re-organisation in family relationships for the Southern European family and must have implications for the stability of the personal situation in which many migrant children live;

—children, especially the girls, spend long hours looking after younger siblings or in part-time jobs;

—jobs worked at are often below the skill level of the immigrant worker—he must accept what he can find and as quickly as possible;

—unemployment among Southern Europeans is higher than among Anglo-Australians or Northern European Australians and introduces a cause of instability in the lives of those who came from rural areas and were self-employed.

4. *New customs, folkways and mores.* There are an enormous number of new ways for the traditional newcomer to learn. I will attempt to highlight a few of the styles, values and ideals of Western urban Australia that are baffling to the transitional newcomer and when first encountered amount to culture shock:

(i) The adjustment to factory work, where the time of start and finish and the pace at which the work is done is determined by someone else.

(ii) The way in which leisure time is spent in the new society, especially the pride in house and garden maintenance.

(iii) Attitudes to food, especially the quantity deemed desirable—grandma, mother or sister takes a hot meal to the school, as our cut lunches appear puny and insufficient for their children's midday meal.

(iv) Separation from kin: from husband/wife separation during the long working-day with no return home at lunch-time; and from children throughout the long school day—these are new experiences.

(v) The importance of materialism as a measure of worth; family, family honour, marriage, parenthood are the measures of social status in the villages of Southern Europe, and not income, car and house, as in Anglo-Australia.

(vi) The place of strangers in one's life. The infant welfare sister, the teacher, the doctor are unknown; therefore how can they be trusted? Trust is the outcome of a long relationship in the villages of Southern Europe.

(vii) Adolecence, the experience of adolescence, the adolescent and his confused status in our society are far removed from the easy transition from childhood to adulthood in the villages of Southern Europe.

(viii) The expression of individuality. There is a belief that children should express only beliefs held by parents, as there is the belief that women serve the other members of the family. Expressions of individuality by children and wives can create friction in the Southern European family.

(ix) The role of children; they are a personification of the family's hopes and dreams (or at least the sons are).
(See Cox, D., 1974.)

Forms of hospitality, displays of emotion, displays of aggression, the place of animals, the role of competition—these are all spheres likely to be defined differently in the Anglo-Australian culture and in the cultures of the transitional newcomers to Australia.

5. *The self-identity of the newcomer.* For the transitional immigrant there is a feeling of total bewilderment about his social status—or more particularly lack of it. It was never in doubt in the old situation; it was measured by:
—the honour of his family's name;
—his marital and parental status;
—his honesty and righteousness ;
—his loyalty, to his kin or in-group.
But here, the bewilderment and disorientation that might be experienced by many of our traditional newcomers is summed up in these words:

> social esteem is low, hard work can seem like an insult to your work mates, there is so much threat of shame and loss of face amid strange customs, terrifyingly large institutions like hospitals and schools to be coped with, so much growing anxiety in the face of inability to help one's children upon whom the upward mobility of the family as a whole depends. (Brotherhood of St. Laurence, 1971.)

All this can amount to a feeling of incredible inadequacy.

THE SCHOOL AND THE TRANSITIONAL NEWCOMER. Keeping in mind that the transitional migrant arrives believing that education will be the vehicle for children's and his family's social mobility in this country, I believe that we should take a specific look at the school both as an area of expectation and as an area of social experience.

1. *From the perspective of the child.* Whether his early years of rearing took place in his country of origin or here in Australia within his family of origin, the migrant child arrives at school or preschool with his ethnic identity largely intact; his world of shared meanings and his image of himself have been created within his ethnic origins. He arrives at school to discover that his world of symbols is rarely reflected in his classroom.

*Migration Action*, Vol. 1, 1974, says this of the Australian school room:

> Despite the lip-service to the contrary the Australian school continues to function as an agency of assimilation in the strictly Anglo-conformist meaning of the word . . . it does not forbid the use of other languages but it achieves not so very different results by its attempt to treat all children in exactly the same way as if they were all little Anglo-Saxons . . . its effect on the migrant child is to gradually knock out of him any of his cultural uniqueness and originality.

With apologies to those teachers who do otherwise, I suggest that the child is often made quickly aware of the low prestige of his ethnic language and ethnic knowledge and this situation runs the risk of him rejecting or becoming ashamed of his own background, family and ethnic identity.

Both peer group and school put him through a more intense socialising process into his culture of adoption than any institution or group does for his parents, and thus his understanding of the dominant Australian culture runs ahead of that of his parents and inevitably creates breakdown in communication and conflict between the parents and the children when the parents believe that peer group and school have joined forces to alienate their children from them. Usually unaided, the migrant child must work out his own pattern of integration between his culture of origin and culture of adoption, and until he does, he is likely to feel alienated from both.

These quotes are from first-formers:

"I was new Australian, I had no one to speak to or sit to; everybody was like stranger to me . . . I was lonely even at play or lunch-time. I was lonely . . . I had to just lean on the fence for a few months then everybody started pushing me."

How do you manage to explain home to school and school to home? Sophia: "I don't, you just put on an act at school, put on an act like an Australian girl y'know."

Or the philosophical reply of an Italian when asked what it was like when he went home from his Australian school: "When I reach a certain paling in a fence, I become a little Italian child." (Bullivant, B., 1973.)

Sometimes ethnic values stand in the way of progress at school—e.g., a child who has been schooled in rote learning will have difficulty in adjusting to discovery learning; or, e.g., the child whose parent says, "Stop wasting your time reading and learn something", is having an ethnic impediment placed in his scholastic path.

2. *From the perspective of the school.* Our schools have not been highly successful agents of learning for many of the migrant children who have attended them, but the fault has not always been with the individual teacher or the individual school.

The vast majority of teachers who impose Anglo values—such as the development of individuality—upon European/Australian pupils do so without understanding the familial conflict that will ensue if the child pursues personal goals or without thought of the support system that the school should offer if it encourages such behaviour. Most Australian teachers have not been given the opportunity to see the world through the European/Australian's perspective, nor have they been encouraged to see ethnic differences in positive terms. To the extent that they have had their thoughts directed to the migrant child at all, those thoughts have been expressed in negative terms such as *deprived* or *socially disadvantaged.*

3. *From the perspective of the transitional parents.* Migrant parents see clearly that education is the essential commodity for social improvement, but, recalling their likely mistrust of the strange and the stranger, their ambivalence toward the school is further reinforced by their own very slender personal experience of formal education—Southern European migrants to this country overwhelmingly have less than six years of formal education.

Notwithstanding this, they have a clear picture of what they believe should happen in a good school, and by and large our schools do not match their expectations or their ideal.

Several studies of migrant parents' comments on our schools (Claydon, L., La Trobe Task Force, 1973, 1975) report the following:

—They have no clear idea of the rationale upon which our school programmes are based.

—Why do pupils not sit in serried ranks to be taught?

—School reports need to be presented in numerical terms: what do the comments made at parents' nights mean in percentage terms?

—Schoolyard supervision is inadequate: children are not checked for slouching in the playground.

—Laughing and joking and other informal activities have no part to play in the classroom.

—Homework should be set; it should take the form of exercises to be recited to the parent and then at school next morning.

—Teachers should be feared and respected.

—There is far too much movement around the room at school.

—Parents should have more control over what is taught at school.

—School must be a maintainer of moral standards.

—Children should not be encouraged to argue with adults.

Apart from their criticism of the pedagogical styles in our classrooms and of the content of some disciplines, apart from the belief that school attempts to alienate their children from them, apart from the desire to have sons taught by men and not female teachers, transitional parents have further grounds for discontent. For their children do not have success rates equal to their representation in school populations; they are over-represented, among the functionally illiterate; they are under-represented in high H.S.C. results; they are over-represented in the group of early school-leavers; they are over-represented in the group of non-student adolescents.

One can well understand the disillusionment that lies behind this statement:

> tens of thousands of children of migrants have lost irreparably the opportunity to be educated according to their needs and their capacities . . . and this because governments and the society in general have placed these children along with their parents in the category of the unskilled labourer, or the servant of an unjust exploitative society, a society dominated by its Anglo-Saxon origins. ("Greek-Australian Review" in *Migration Action*, 1974.)

### WHAT DO WE KNOW OF THE SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN OF TRANSITIONAL IMMIGRANTS TO AUSTRALIA?

> Children from families which had high aspirations for their sons both educationally and career-wise did in fact attain higher levels of achievement when these families also maintained close ethnic affiliations and active social lives. (Leathart, 1972).

Leathart concluded that in fact the keynote of success was the social activeness of the family. For, in contrast, children who were doing poorly and who were showing lower levels of self-esteem came from socially isolated families, restricted social lives and had not built up ethnic affiliations. She suggests that social isolation, apathy and personality disintegration are inter-related.

### WHICH OF THE TRADITIONAL MIGRANTS WOULD APPEAR TO BE MOST AT RISK IN TERMS OF UNDERGOING A CRISIS IN IDENTITY AND/OR LOWERING OF SELF-ESTEEM?

1. *Women.* Particularly if they remain at home in isolation, without learning English, and particularly after they recognise that both husband and children are growing away from them as they adapt to their culture of adoption.
2. *Those who come in adolescence.* Those who have little opportunity to learn the culture of adoption because they are quickly withdrawn from school. Their position is that of the permanent alien living in Australia with little chance of integration, social or economic success.
3. *Younger children.* Those who are familiar both with their culture of origin and culture of adoption are under pressure from family and ethnic group to conform to an ethnic identity and under pressure from peer groups and school to conform to the Anglo-Australian culture.

In reality these children, these adolescents and these women at risk are of both worlds, the old and the new, and they all need a more accommodative, a more supportive and a more positive environment in which to learn about their new culture, to develop their dual-cultural identity and to understand their dual cultural situation.

### GROWTH OF AN ACCOMMODATIVE, SUPPORTIVE AND POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE SCHOOL.

Why the school? Sometimes it is the only Anglo institution with which the migrant parent and child is in contact. Further, the school can provide a common meeting-ground for the Anglo-Australian and the European Australian. The school is the institution to which both do come. Thus the school can undertake the functions of:

1. helping the European/Australian and his family to accommodate to their culture of adoption;
2. enabling Anglo-Australians to understand that they live in a multi-cultural society;
3. assisting both the Anglo-Australian and the European Australian to learn what being a member of another culture means. This degree of tolerance is essential in a pluralistic society and certainly in a cultural sense Australia is a pluralistic society.

### WHAT THE MULTI-CULTURAL CLASSROOM WILL REQUIRE:

1. *Teachers with a different type of commitment*—to shed their ethnocentricity if that is possible, or at least to admit to its existence.
2. *Teachers with a different type of education*—a concentration on understanding the many subcultures of this society.
3. *A very open classroom*—openness between the classroom, the parents, the ethnic community. Community and parents will come to offer ethnic programmes, community and parents will be used as a resource. Children will be used as ethnic resource.
4. *Parent and adult education.* Flexi-time, flexi-age arrangements are evident in U.K. schools. These are used both for dissemination of information about cultures into which the adult students have not been socialised, and for continuing studies for adolescents and adults.
5. *A parent room at the school*—especially to encourage the isolated, reticent housebound mother to discover a social arena for herself.
6. *Curriculum multi-cultural and multi-lingual.* Many of these programmes overcome social isolation and perhaps the apathy and personality disintegration which I previously suggested might be the outcome of social isolation.

If you are interested in promoting migrant parent involvement in your classroom, I suggest you read Anders (1975). The task is worth while, but not an easy one, for we have for years been aware of social class differences and differential rates of success in our educational system and yet techniques remain to be developed to provide real educational equality across social class differences. The complexity of multi-lingual, multi-cultural multi-ethnic schools requires great skills of the teachers involved.

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# Pre-School Bilingual Education

By Dr MARTA RADO*

BILINGUAL EDUCATION has become a catch phrase; consequently it needs clarification. In the Australian context, it is associated with migrant education. On the international scene, it has recently received extensive attention in connection with students who carry an additional learning load in that they have to master the language of instruction before they can participate in the formal learning process. These students may be members of ethnic minorities within super-industrial states, or citizens of developing nations whose language problems are often quite complex.

Of course, bilingual education is not new. For a long time it has been a prerogative of the socially privileged. In their case it needs no justification. If it is a luxury, they can afford it; if it is an intellectual advantage, they would want it. So elitist bilingual schools continue to operate successfully in the United States, Canada, France and other countries.

Elitist education over time does affect mass education. It is therefore interesting to note that bilingual education has not been generally adopted. On the contrary, bilingual education has become a form of special teaching, closely linked to the concept of compensation, as it is designed to serve the ethnic-minority child. Since bilingual education for the disadvantaged is publicly funded, it must be shown to be profitable. In elitist education there are no comparable pressures for accountability. Consequently, bilingual education for linguistic minorities has been more widely documented than its elitist counterpart. Because curriculum innovation is such a complex task, the evaluation of bilingual programmes tends to yield inconclusive results. Cohen's (1975) study is a notable exception. He has found that bilingual education in one Californian school had a favourable effect on its Mexican American pupils. These "Mexican American youngsters were becoming literate in both Spanish and English; they were using their Spanish without shame; their performance in the academic subjects was as good as or better than that of comparison youngsters in an English-only program, and they felt better about being Mexican American and about their school experience. Furthermore, the successful experience of the children appeared to have a positive spin-off effect upon the parents. These parents gained greater conviction themselves that there was an important place for the knowledge of Spanish in an increasingly multilingual society" (p. 264).

Whether evaluation results are favourable or not, we must be aware of the fact that outcomes cannot be easily generalised to situations other than those for which the programmes were originally developed. These programmes can be studied profitably by Australian educators but cannot be transplanted as they stand, because the situation of our ethnic minority students is in significant ways different from that obtaining in Canada or the United States. Details of such programmes are readily available and I will not report on them here. (Sources of information include: Andersson and Boyer, 1970; John and Horner, 1971; Cohen, 1975; The Dissemination Centre for Bilingual Bicultural Education, Austin, Texas; The Centre for Research into Bilingualism at Laval.)

## THE AIMS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Although I don't propose to describe overseas bilingual programmes in detail, a short discussion of the nature of bilingual education might be warranted. Bilingual education can take many forms and is therefore difficult to define. But there is one distinctive feature that all programmes share, namely they recognise the student's knowledge of at least two languages. The actual realisation of bilingual education can vary from first-language and/or second-language teaching programmes to instruction in more than one language. Although bilingual education always takes more than one language into account, it does not necessarily aim at fostering bilingualism. On the contrary, the covert objective of many bilingual education programmes is monolingualism. As the learner becomes more efficient in the second language, the first language is phased out. In such programmes, bilingual education is used as a technique to enable the learner to make the transition from the first to the second language more effectively. Or conversely, some bilingual education programmes are overtly supportive of ethnic identity and language and aim at drastically reducing the second-language component of the curriculum.

Contrary to our expectations, then, not all bilingual education programmes aim at bilingualism. Paradoxically, the French immersion programmes in Canada, which are essentially monolingual, have set themselves this very goal. In these programmes English-speaking children are taught entirely in French in kindergarten and primary school. These are special classes organised for English Canadian students so that they are not competing with native speakers of French. These classes are attended by middle-class students whose first language

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has a high status and whose parents have elected to develop their bilingualism in this way.

The curricula for these monolingual programmes are less complex than bilingual curricula would be. They have been inspired by research workers who have the expertise and the funds to evaluate them. The results available to date support the view that bilingualism is an advantage. Students attending these classes are comparable in their school achievement to monolingual students and, at the same time, have become competent in a second language to a degree that could not have been achieved in the foreign-language classroom.

Such programmes draw our attention to the fact that bilingualism is, to a large measure, a social issue. It can lend social prestige if both languages involved have status. If one of the languages, particularly the first language, is of low status, bilingualism is divested of all its glamour and treated with suspicion. In these situations, educationists and the general public demand proof of its superiority over monolingualism. This is not an impossible challenge to meet as we have some evidence that balanced bilingualism does have a favourable effect. For instance, the findings of Cummins and Gulutsan (1974:135) in Canada confirm those of earlier researchers. They suggest that there is a tendency for

> bilinguals to perform better on measures of concept formation and general reasoning . . . (and) that bilingualism confers some type of "verbal enrichment", i.e., a greater facility at representing the world through linguistic mediation as opposed to imagistic.

To this I would like to add that for the individual, language is a window on the world so that, with each language we know, we gain an additional view, not so much an unfolding panorama as a somewhat different image. A change of language implies a different window-pane which filters experience in certain predetermined ways particular to the language. The assumption that language not only mediates experience, but also filters or structures it, expressing some aspects of reality while neglecting others, has led to the Sapir-Whorf theory which maintains that speakers of different languages have a radically different world view. This strong version of the linguistic relativity theory has been repeatedly refuted. It is nevertheless often quoted by those who fear bilingualism. Such antagonists maintain that these different world views could cause psychological problems. I am mentioning the theory here, because in my opinion world views mediated by languages are not exclusive of each other. They are variants of basic human experiences which can be accommodated by the bilingual individual, and as we have seen earlier can substantially enrich him.

## WHO IS A BILINGUAL?

Despite its apparent advantages, bilingualism is more often imposed than voluntary. For instance, it is my contention that adult immigrants to Australia must become bilingual. If they wish to participate even minimally in the affairs of the community, it is not a question of choice. Linguistically, we have a clear-cut situation because English is not only a majority language but also a world language. From an immigrant's point of view, it not only serves as a means of communication *vis-a-vis* the members of the dominant Australian society and its institutions, but also *vis-a-vis* other immigrant groups. On the whole, immigrants to Australia have always recognised this and have made an effort to learn English with a varying degree of success. In my definition, immigrants with a non-English-speaking background would be classified as bilinguals, because they can function to some degree in the Australian context. Bilingualism created by social circumstances is not a question of linguistic proficiency but rather a question of the ability to communicate.

Bilinguals do not only vary in their language competence, but also in their language use and attitude to language norms. Some families use a dialect variety exclusively; others use a standard variety on formal occasions and at times also use English. Whatever language is used, it will probably show elements introduced from the other language. Sometimes this goes unnoticed and can significantly and permanently mark the speech of bilinguals (see Clyne, 1967, 1972). But many immigrants disapprove of such a casual attitude to language and try to avoid interference. Although they do not always succeed, as Clyne has shown, the foreign elements in their two languages may be negligible.

The pre-school children of migrant families, therefore, could have a variety of language models. Moreover, language would be valued differently by these families as to conformity to established norms (standard *v.* non-standard norms). But perhaps more significant than all these is the question of language choice. Some adults favour the first language and insist on its exclusive use among all members of the family. Others are less concerned with language maintenance and do not impose it beyond direct exchanges with their children, who may in fact speak English to each other. In extreme, but by no means infrequent cases, the children refuse to use the first language, although they clearly understand it and the parents continue to address them in the first language. I would like to call this asymmetrical language use.

I have summarised the various patterns that can develop in this situation as follows:

(a) The family within the child's circle will develop the child's first language to literacy levels. This implies the knowledge of a standard, with or without the addition of a non-standard variety such as a regional dialect.

(b) The family will maintain the child's first language. This may be a standard variety and/or a dialect in its spoken form.

(c) The child is exposed to the first language in the family, understands what is said to him but does not speak it.

(d) The child refuses to understand or speak the first language and becomes an English monolingual speaker.

First-language maintenance can be supported, without necessarily involving the school system, by encouraging the growth of ethnic schools. But these only reach a fraction of the children they purport to serve. This may be due to a variety of reasons, such as lack of interest in the first language or the fact that attendance at ethnic schools entails extra effort, since it makes demands on the family's financial resources and on the leisure time of the children.

Ethnic schools have their merits (see Tsounis, 1974), but they cannot be equated with bilingual education of the sort that makes bilingualism an organic part of general schooling. Is there any justification for advocating such a course of action? How will this affect language development? If bilingualism is desirable, how can we cater for the educational needs of children with diverse language backgrounds?

## JUSTIFICATION OF BILINGUALISM

The fostering of bilingualism in migrant children can be justified on the ground that more often than not is is a *fait accompli*. It can be assumed that these children frequently interact with adults and peers who use the ethnic language. This implies that some of their experiences are mediated in a language other than English. In other words, their total linguistic experience spreads across two languages. As we have seen, two fully developed languages can bestow an advantage, but the same cannot be said about two fragmented languages. In a monolingual situation, school and home language complete and support each other. This gives opportunities for expansion within a given linguistic framework. In a bilingual situation, the two languages supply alternative expressions, but often only one of the alternatives is available to the learner. Both experiences are essentially enriching. There is a significant difference, however, between them. Expansion is an integral feature of language development. In my terminology, it is tantamount to the process of language acquisition with respect to vocabulary and syntax. Interlinguistic alternatives are not basic ingredients of this process. For the monolingual child who learns a foreign language, such alternatives are a desirable luxury, but not so for the bilingual child. In the language development of the latter they play a crucial role. They provide the basis for expansions in both languages. If, in one of the child's languages, a form is lacking, it cannot be expanded. Or, if the form exists but there is no opportunity to expand it, language does not develop according to our usual expectations. Our migrant children who are treated as monolinguals, with respect to the first language in the home and with respect to the second language at school, are handicapped by lack of opportunity to observe both their languages in a sufficiently wide context. As a rule the home cannot provide both languages, whereas the school can in fact do so. Clearly, one must conclude that pre-school education has a unique role to play here. If a pre-school experience is desirable for the monolingual, it is undoubtedly essential for the bilingual child.

## SOME HIDDEN ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

The newcomer to language must get the idea that intentions can be expressed by combining sounds in a systematic way. The degree of abstraction involved in even the simplest verbal expression is considerable; yet we can take it for granted that the child can grasp the basic principles of language and will effectively crack the code he is exposed to, eventually mastering its intricate details and developing into a competent speaker. Of course, individuals vary in their language proficiency, as they do in everything else. We all have our distinctive ideolect or personal speech.

Despite this, one can assume that adults are mature speakers of their language, and are capable of inducting their children into it, which of course they do. The method used is verbal interaction, not conventional teaching. The adult supplies language and reacts to the child's language in socially appropriate ways, but how the system operates is left to the child to find out for himself.

What is so tantalising about language it its inscrutability. Despite our personal experience of learning our first language, and possibly a second or several other languages, no one has so far been able to construct a fully explanatory model for describing any language. The more language is studied the more it becomes apparent how complex natural languages really are. In the absence of a definitive grammatical theory, we are perhaps justified in choosing the theory which best answers our particular questions.

If we accept observation as one of the prerequisites of language development, then we can assume that the bilingual has quantitatively more to observe. Here I am not referring to the volume of the language corpus but rather the grammatical markings, the language-specific ways of expressing intentions that are universalistic. All natural languages have the appropriate mechanisms to convey the judgements human beings make about the world, such as "Who did it, who it happened to, and what got changed" (Fillmore 1968). These relationships have been spelt out in some detail by contemporary linguists (Fillmore 1968, Chafe 1970). For our purpose it might be sufficient to note that in semantically based linguistic theories the central element of the sentence is the verb, to which the various noun elements relate in specific ways. Fillmore calls these noun relationships "roles". One of the important roles is the agentive, i.e., animate instigator of the action as identified by the verb. In English, by preference, this role is expressed by the grammatical subject of the sentence (*John* opened the door). For stylistic reasons, however, English-speakers may choose to give this sentence the passive form in which case the agentive "John" will not be subjectivised (The door was opened by John). In the course of language acquisition the English-speaking monolingual child has to be able to identify the underlying case roles of subject, object, indirect object. We have ample evidence that this takes time. For instance, initially sentences are interpreted on the basis that the grammatical subject is identical with the agentive. "The girl was pushed by the boy" is understood as the girl doing the pushing.

The pre-school child *par excellence* is deeply involved in sorting out the case relationships in sentences and their surface manifestations. This is a lengthy process. Carol Chomsky's (1969) research seems to indicate that it extends into pre-adolescence. The bilingual's sorting task is even more complex. The six basic relationships posited by Fillmore have been identified by Brown (1973), Sorensen (1974) and others in the corpus of children's early utterances. At first all case markings are absent and the limit is two cases per sentence. The child is restricted in the number of cases it can combine, but not in the relationships it can handle. Recognition of these relationships may be one of the prerequisites of language.

The very young child can communicate, despite the absence of grammatical markings, because the meaning of the message is conveyed by the context so that in many situations they are redundant. They are dispensable because their function is to "modulate" basic meanings and not to convey them. For instance, the articles *a* and *the* make the thing referred to by a noun specific or unspecific. Without the noun they modulate they are meaningless, but the converse is not true.

Brown suggests "that a major dimension of linguistic development is learning to express always and automatically certain things (agent, action, number, tense, and so on) even though these meanings may be . . . redundant" (p. 245). He speculates that it may be "economical to build up neural networks, . . . which will guarantee the invariant expression of certain meanings so that the central processing capacity can be left free to deal with the communicational exigencies of each individual situation" (p. 242).

Obligatory modulations are drawn arbitrarily by each language from a common language-pool. They take a long time to learn not only due to their arbitrary and redundant nature, but perhaps because they are often acoustically weak and display a wide variety of irregularities.

The basic relations and their unmarked expressions are learnt by every normal child. The acquisition of obligatory modulations shows a much more varied pattern. Some obligatory variations are linguistically complex and are therefore acquired late. Their form and use often differentiate the standard from the non-standard speaker. Linguistic complexity is influenced by such considerations as regularity and semantic clarity.

Slobin (1975) and his co-workers at Berkeley are comparing the acquisition of English, Italian, Serbo-Croatian, and Turkish as native languages. In Turkish the system of nouns is totally regular. Inflected nouns consist of clearly segmentable units, each bearing one element of meaning. The Turkish child masters the system before the age of two. In contrast, the Serbo-Croation system is highly irregular.

> Little wonder that the Yugoslavian child does not master such a system until about age five — three years or so later than the Turkish child . . . The picture is really reversed, however, in regard to syntax. Indo-European speaking children acquire means of inserting one sentence into another at a very early age . . . Our Yugoslav children were forming relative clauses, for example when they were two years old. Here it is Indo-European which maintains a clear mapping from underlying semantics to surface form. Consider an example from Serbo-Croatian. A two-year-old girl said the equivalent of "I want doll that daddy bought" . . . The comparable form in Turkish syntax is not mastered until age five (p. 8).

Slobin's research seems to indicate that conceptual development is not directly reflected in language, Some meanings, although understood, may not be expressed by the language learner if the linguistic form is complex. Slobin cites the Serbo-Croatian-Hungarian bilingual child who said "doll in drawer" in Hungarian (the form is regular) and "doll drawer" in Serbo-Croation (the form is irregular). This highlights the likelihood that the language development of the bilingual child will not show point to point correspondence across his two languages.

Language is essentially a combinatorial system. This is evident on the sentence level but less so on the word level. Yet words can be analysed into smaller units of meaning, i.e. semantic primitives. Their occurrence is not unique to a particular word but rather to a number of different words. "A semantic component or predicate which is said to play an important role in the English language is CAUSE" (Bowerman, 1974:149). This semantic primitive is present in a verb like *kill*: cause to die. It may or may not be present in a word like *open*. The primitive CAUSE is present in the transitive verb *open* ("Open the window!"), but not the adjective *open* ("He climbed through the open window"). This analysis is particular to English. Other languages may have different rules for bonding semantic primitives into words. (Compare the English, "He entered the room", with the French, "Il entra dans la chambre"). The semantic features themselves, however, are drawn from a universal set. Using more than one language entails knowing how to combine the semantic primitives in language-specific ways, in other words, how to identify the sub-components of words. Before this can be done the semantic primitives themselves have to be acquired. Bowerman (1974) has traced the developmental history of the primitive CAUSE in the speech of her own daughter Christy.

Typically, when the semantic primitive CAUSE was understood, it was generalised to verbs that are not causitive in English, e.g. "I was singing him." In this instance, the little girl was reporting that she got her little brother to sing. Further, this child created novel causitive verbs, apparently unaware of existing ones, thus, "I falled it", instead of, "I dropped it".

I have deliberately drawn your attention to those aspects of language acquisition that are not accessible for direct explication and teaching, with any age-group. I have concentrated on these submerged aspects of language because I wanted to emphasise the importance of making language available to the learner for observation. It is my contention that the child's conceptual development and the universal language-acquisition principles posited by Slobin (1973) will enable the first-language learner to regulate the amount and kind of linguistic data he will attend to at a given time. As he gets older and begins to learn a second language, his conceptual development will no longer help him to attend to the second language in an orderly, selective progression. The older second-language learner is at a disadvantage because he is able to pay attention to too much information, resulting in overloading. Consequently he is a poorer observer than the first-language learner.

How quickly age affects the selective function that cognitive development plays in language acquisition is demonstrated by Hansen-Bede (1975). She reports on a three-year-old English-speaking girl acquiring Urdu, that "rather than passing through the well-documented early stages of negation in sequence, she simultaneously applied several rules that she had used and discarded on the way to English proficiency" (p. 123).

## PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Ideally, the bilingual should have similar experiences in both languages. The expected outcome would be competence in both. Since we do not normally lead double lives, if we are bilinguals our languages would rarely match perfectly. Even if we cannot achieve the ideal state of perfectly balanced bilingualism, however, we can strive to approximate it.

Asymmetrical linguistic experiences are on the whole predictable. Therefore, in some instances, the balance can be restored. Some language experiences may not, however, always be deemed eligible for duplication by professional educators. For instance, I wonder how pre-school teachers view baby-talk. This simplified speech (Ferguson, 1971) is used in many cultures to address young children.

> The style itself has been characterized by three kinds of material: (1) a set of words peculiar to the style, (2) a sub-set of the language's normal intonational and paralinguistic phenomena, (3) phonological and grammatical modification of the normal language . . . (Moreover) reduplication of syllables or whole words is common (Landes 1975:368).

Farwell (1973), while discussing the baby-talk data supplied by Ferguson (1964), draws our attention to the fact that there is usually a special baby-talk affix, such as the English diminutive *y*, (*doggy*, *potty*) a greater use of nouns than pronouns and the replacement of first-person constructions by the third-person. (*Mummy will open it*, instead of *I will open it.*) Some of these features may highlight certain aspects of language and so have informative value.

One would assume that migrant children miss out on baby-talk in English. They are too old for it in the pre-school setting which, in any case, does not provide a natural context for it.

This raises the question of the language used in institutions, such as the pre-school. Let us briefly review the home situation. Adults adjust their language to their listeners. They can do this by drawing on their linguistic repertoire or range of styles they command. One type of style variation is that of adaptation to the needs of the linguistically less mature. All adults know how to speak to children. Both Farwell (1973) and Landes (1975) have reviewed the relevant literature in support of this assumption. Further, Landes has provided us with a diagram of syntactic and stylistic filters operating in adult speech to children (Appendix 1, 1975:358). This is a dynamic model influenced by the steadily increasing language skill of the child. Syntactically, language to children is characterised as simplistic, involving few transformations,, short sentences lacking subordination, and exaggerated stress and intonation. Landes remarks: "Although tailoring of input for children appears to be universal, what is selected and what is emphasized may be culturally specific" (p. 363). For instance, in American adult speech to children there is a preponderance of interrogatives.

The language addressed to children is influenced by its socialising function, i.e., managing the child's behaviour. Moreover, the child does not have the full status of a conversational partner. Other stylistic characteristics of adult speech are repetitions, expansions, modelling, corrections. Their specific function and relative importance in language acquisition are as yet largely a matter of conjecture. Is it more useful to the child to be told "Can you say, 'Paint brush'?" (modelling) or to be given the expanded response, "Yes, the dog is barking", to his telegraphese "Dog barking"? (cited by Farwell, 1973: 42). Curiously, this type of expansion and correction generally seems to be the least effective. McNeill (1970) reports a mother-child exchange where the child's "Nobody don't like me" was corrected eight times by the mother's response of "No, nobody likes me", resulting in the child's altering his statement to "Nobody don't likes me". This example is in some ways atypical because corrections are usually socially, not linguistically oriented.

Landes (1975) cites two observations in support of this view.

Ervin-Tripp:

> Adults listening to children speak are usually listening to the message, just as they are when they listen to adults. Our evidence, is that they comment on the form only in the case of socially marked deviations such as obscenities, lower class non-standard forms . . . (p. 371)

Mitchell:

> Most of the corrections I observed by mothers to the group under five focused on speech etiquette rather than grammar. For example, a child enters the room and fails to greet the other adult present 'Can't you say hello?'; child interrupts a conversation 'Wait until I am finished' or 'Say excuse me first': child uses taboo word, child fails to maintain a civil tone when speaking to mother; (377-372)

One would expect that the pre-school teacher is equally adept in adjusting her language to the capacities of the child. Similarly, the socialising function of language would play a role in the pre-school setting. There would also be attempts to shape the child's language in a systematic way.

Ervin-Tripp's (1966:88) comparison of the language of the home with the language of the school is pertinent here. "Speech with family and friends is likely to be repetitive, descriptive, predicative, and to involve brief, situationally embedded utterances. In school, there is emphasis on information, enrichment of vocabulary to describe and explain absent objects, and differentiations of grammatical structures for logical distinctions."

What needs to be done is well understood, and pre-school programmes cater for the child's linguistic needs in English. To offer a similar programme to the bilingual in his second language is the challenge we have to face. Of course, the necessary materials can be developed in any language, but how many languages can we handle in the one pre-school room and who will handle them?

The effort expended in bilingual education at the pre-school level will be wasted unless such programmes are continued throughout the bilingual's schooling. How this can be done with older students has been demonstrated by the Multilingual Project. This project has developed study units in the social science area. They are available in English and some community language versions, i.e., Arabic, Croatian, Serbian, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish. The unit texts match page by page across languages and are accompanied by activity materials contained in a resource kit. An important feature of the units is their suitability for small group work. This makes it possible for students with different language backgrounds to work on the same materials in the same classroom. This approach is student- and not teacher-centred. Nevertheless, the teacher does play an important role. To be effective he needs to develop organisational skills, familiarise himself with group dynamics and, above all, demonstrate a positive, supportive attitude.

The Multilingual Project has been operative in Victorian State and Independent schools since 1975. Requests for the units have also been received from other states, including A.C.T. and the Northern Territory.

Initially the materials were designed to serve the 11-13 age-group, (Forms 1-3 in the Victorian system), but they have been used successfully with younger students in the primary school. Originally the project was based on the assumption that students would be literate at least in one language. As we well know, this is not always the case. As the necessary facilities are now available, we have started to record the unit texts on tape. Taped materials will make bilingual education available to a wider range of students. The same technique could be employed to reach all age-groups in the primary school.

I have reason to believe that a significant number of primary school teachers would like to see the project extended in this way. Such an extension, however, is not possible without official support.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion I would like to plead for patience on behalf of bilinguals. Australian research (cf. de Lemos, 1975) tends to concentrate on their lower achievement scores, compared with their monolingual peers. As we have seen, there is reason to believe that this is due to their monolingual schooling. Balanced bilingualism, in the course of its acquisition, may constitute an additional learning load which could in some ways slow down the learner. This may be a small price to pay in view of the long-term advantages. Australians are inconsistent in their attitude to bilingualism. On the one hand, balanced bilingualism is admired; on the other hand, we prevent our potential bilinguals from achieving this superior and, in their case, necessary skill. As to our monolingual Australian children, excluding the French-Australian school in Canberra, we have not thought of them in terms of bilingual education. The Australian child is not given the chance to develop his foreign-language talents fully. It is taken for granted that he would not wish to do so. This is a false assumption that should be rectified. If bilingual schooling has value, it should be available to all students who wish to take advantage of it. Without an across-the-board participation bilingual education may be just a minor passing phase on the Australian educational scene, a temporary form of special migrant education. If we really value it and are serious about making it generally available, then it must be commenced at the pre-school level. Indeed the pre-school can and should play a major role in bilingual education.

- *Appendices to Dr. Rado's paper, pp. 120-122.*

## *Appendix 1*

James Earle Landes: "Speech Addressed to Children: Issues and Characteristics of Parental Input."

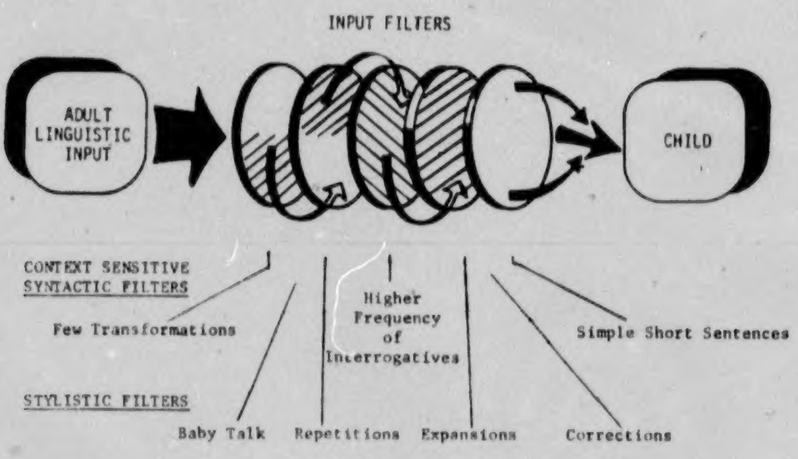
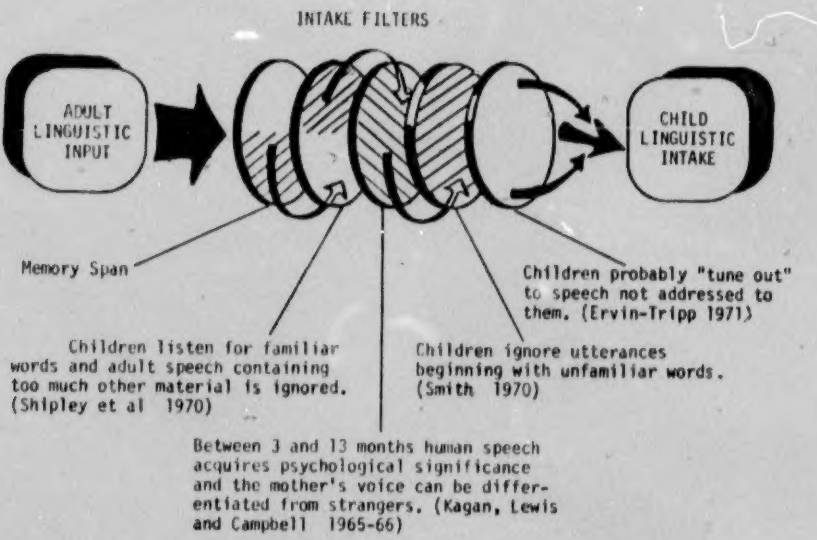

INPUT FILTERS
ADULT LINGUISTIC INPUT
CHILD
CONTEXT SENSITIVE SYNTACTIC FILTERS
Few Transformations
Higher Frequency of Interrogatives
Simple Short Sentences
STYLISTIC FILTERS
Baby Talk
Repetitions
Expansions
Corrections

*Figure 2. Input Filters.*


INTAKE FILTERS
ADULT LINGUISTIC INPUT
CHILD LINGUISTIC INTAKE
Memory Span

Children probably "tune out" to speech not addressed to them. (Ervin-Tripp 1971)

Children listen for familiar words and adult speech containing too much other material is ignored. (Shipley et al 1970)

Children ignore utterances beginning with unfamiliar words. (Smith 1970)

Between 3 and 13 months human speech acquires psychological significance and the mother's voice can be differentiated from strangers. (Kagan, Lewis and Campbell 1965-66)

*Figure 3. Intake Filters.*

*Language Learning: A Journal of Applied Linguistics*, Vol. 25, No. 2, December 1975

## *Appendix II*

## THE MULTILINGUAL PROJECT

THE MULTILINGUAL PROJECT is a form of bilingual education. It is designed for a situation where immigration has created linguistic minorities, as is the case in Australia. It provides learning materials, for bilingual students, in parallel forms of English and the language of their countries of origin. For the purposes of the Project, the term "bilingual" refers to individuals who can function in two language environments.

This approach recognises the need to offer students whose first language is not English an expanded programme which takes cognisance of their family language.

Objectives of the project are:

(a) to foster student's conceptual development;
(b) to stimulate students' language development in the mother-tongue and in English;
(c) to provide student satisfaction with the learning process;
(d) to reduce the difficulties created by a multilingual situation;
(e) to support teachers sympathetic to the students' linguistic and cultural heritage;
(f) to provide teacher satisfaction with the teaching process.

In Australia, the dispersion of migrant students among schools, the number of languages, the range of disciplines and student achievement in these, are so diversified that the deployment of ethnic teachers, even if these are available, does not offer an overall solution. Such teachers could certainly not cater for the wide variety of languages now to be heard in Australia, some of them spoken by only two or three pupils in a particular school. The Project materials, consisting of self-contained units suitable for independent or small group study, can be used by English-speaking teachers with a minimum of help, which may be given by bilingual pupils, parents or other assistants. Australian and/or ethnic teacher involvement has a vital role to play in organising classroom activities and excursions suggested by the units, and in providing further activities and reading materials.

The Project builds on the sound educational principle of taking the student's existing knowledge as a basis for future learning. In the case of the immigrant child who knows another language, this can assist him in continuing his education at a level commensurate with his intellectual ability, by using his total linguistic knowledge. It can also reduce the adverse effects of the frustrating waiting period when learning is largely limited to the acquisition of English. Clearly, immigrant students must learn English, but they must also continue their general education. A bilingual approach aims to minimise the interruptions caused by a change in language and/or pattern of schooling.

This approach is designed to serve the following groups of students:

> Migrant children who have not achieved full competence in English and therefore do not make good progress at school.
> They can be classified into two groups:
> (a) those who are recent arrivals and have experienced part of their schooling abroad; and
> (b) those who have a strong native language background in their home and neighbourhood.
>
> Migrant children who are competent in English and in their mother-tongue.

In addition, it can be used by English-speaking students to assist them in second-language acquisition.

Learning materials currently being developed by the Project are available in Spanish, Greek, Italian, Arabic, Turkish, Croatian and Serbian. They introduce students to areas of general knowledge based on History, Geography, Anthropology, Economics and Science. Where relevant, attention is drawn to Australian conditions and customs.

This general course consists of a series of independent study units, which contain booklets in English and parallel migrant-language versions, self-correction guides, and a resource kit with supplementary audio-visual materials. The resource kit is specially designed to stimulate activities other than paper and pencil work.

The materials are student-centred to allow for maximum flexibility in a complex situation. Equally importantly, they give students the opportunity to learn in the language of their preference. This preference may not only be governed by language dominance, but also by the topic and the social situation, and should be left to the student's own judgement. The emphasis on student choice is based on the assumption that to feel at ease with the language of instruction will facilitate learning.

Once learning has taken place, the student can be encouraged to compare the bilingual texts. Observing how the same idea is expressed in written form in English and the second-language should stimulate language development in both.

The immediate production target of the Project is to provide secondary school students with learning materials for a whole school year, used for about one hour daily. The units can be studied on an individual basis, by ethnic groups, by mixed ethnic groups, and in a normal classroom situation where migrant students and monolingual Australians study the same materials in the language or languages of their choice.

The Multilingual Project is now operative in fifteen schools involving about 500 students. They are working with the units "Communications", "Animal Families", "Traffic Accidents", "Myths of the Australian Aborigines" and "Libraries and You". Further units are in process of development by qualified teachers seconded by the Education Department of Victoria. The Department also meets the cost of translating.

It is hoped that bilinguals (Australian and immigrant) already literate in English and another language, who show interest in, and potential to develop, both languages to a high degree of proficiency, could help solve educational problems by serving in an advisory and teaching capacity. Moreover, their interest in languages could provide Australia with the language experts it needs for its educational, social, trade and diplomatic services.

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# Multicultural Education — a Recent Concept

By GWENDA DAVEY*

FIVE YEARS AGO probably no one in Australia would have addressed a conference of this nature on the subject of M.C. education—at least not with a great deal of expectation that the term would be understood and readily supported by the audience. Certainly most Australians were aware that our society contained a multiplicity of cultures, but in most areas of education emphasis was placed on the teaching of English as a second language.

I think the change in attitude towards M.C.E. reflects significant changes in Australians' attitudes towards post-war immigration itself. Former attitudes ranged from what I call the "Great Australian Ostrich" ("if we ignore it it will eventually go away") to a cultural curiosity approach ("what quaint and curious customs the natives have"), through patronage and outright hostility and racism. Many of these attitudes were expressed in the terms of euphenisms used to describe migrants: "reffos", "Balts", "New Australians", "migrants". Even the use of the term "migrant" rather than "immigrant" implies temporary status, like a migratory bird which comes, and then, hopefully, goes away again. "Ethnic" is the current "in" word—a word whose pretentiousness was quickly grasped by Norman Gunston! Perhaps "multiculturism" is the latest—but more of this later.

Attitudes such as the above existed within an overall melting-pot or assimilationist philosophy which required that immigrant cultures be absorbed into the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture. Perhaps it is the sheer strength and vitality of different ethnic groups which has forced some changes—the fact that now about one in four Australians is of non-English-speaking origin has forced awareness that society has changed radically since 1945. Not all sections of society have recognised the changes, however.

The mass-circulation women's magazines in Australia are a most important reflector and shaper of Australians' values. My assistant carried out a quick content analysis of the entire 1975 issue of *Women's Weekly*, *Woman's Day* and *New Idea*. Excluding Chinese cookery "specials", the recognition given to cultural changes in Australian society is practically nil. During all of 1975 the *Women's Weekly* acknowledged Australia's multiculturism only seven times—including one article about cooking baklava, a Greek/Middle Eastern sweet. *New Idea* scored nil. *Woman's Day* was slightly better with six articles. Otherwise, the content suggests that our society has not changed since 1940 (or, for that matter, 1920).

Despite the 1940s mentality of some women's magazines, many Australians have become aware that monumental changes have taken place in our society, and that there are political and social choices to be made in order to preserve and extend a harmonious society. Is our multinational, multilingual and multicultural society to become a Switzerland or a Rhodesia? Hawaii or Lebanon? The current tragedy in Beirut indicates the dangers of denying power and affluence to particular groups in society. Lest this seem remote from Australia—last December at a Cultural Studies Conference in Goulburn, N.S.W., the president of the N.S.W. Turkish Welfare Association described many of the difficulties of Turkish immigrants. Much of his description reflected a community filled with "sorrow and longing", as a Turkish acquaintance of mine described it. However, unemployment was *not* one of the community's problems, despite substantial unemployment throughout the State—the reason being the lowly status of the jobs held by Turks.

Such matters might be described as involving economic and political choices for Australia. What choices in the *social arena* do we have? A currently fashionable term is "cultural pluralism", the idea that "a thousand flowers can blossom", that different cultures can coexist peacefully side by side with each other. This can be not only a static but an inaccurate concept, as all groups affect each other and are changed by each other. Our choices involve decisions about which aspects of each group's life will survive and which change.

In his lecture at the Theodore Fink Memorial Seminar in October, 1975, Dr. J. J. Smolicz from Adelaide University looked at cultural pluralism in terms of cultural INTERACTION, particularly as regards the "creative potential implicit in the interaction between cultures". More importantly, he goes on to point out that interaction is impossible unless the interacting elements, namely the different ethnic cultures, are lively and vigorously maintaining their own ethnicity.

By "ethnicity" I mean the essential nature of any group which distinguishes it from others. Dr. Smolicz describes ethnicity as a function of—

language;
heritage (other than language);
social structure; and
ideology or core value system.

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Different groups have different emphases—e.g.

Jews — religion, historicity (i.e. ideology and heritage);
Poles—language;
Italian—family structure;
Greek—language
Latvian—heritage (e.g. dance).

Until the last few years Australian society and educational institutions have done very little to encourage vigorous ethnicity with the "creative potential" Dr. Smolicz envisages. I think this is undoubtedly reflected in the poor self-image or self-concept which many immigrants and their children possess. I'm sure we can all contribute our own examples of this: children ashamed of their parents, or of their parents' language.

Apart from humanitarian issues involved or any concern for avoidance of social wastage we might have, realism alone tells us that we cannot afford politically to institutionalise any ethnic groups at the bottom of the socio-economic and educational ladder as are, for example, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in the United States.

It is the realisation that educational systems have responsibility in these matters that has given a recent impetus towards multicultural education. Let us now have a closer look at this new piece of jargon.

Melbourne State College this year commenced its first post-graduate diploma for teachers in Inter-Ethnic Studies under the direction of Mr. Phil Matthews. In August, 1975, Phil Matthews spoke to Bendigo State College and presented what he described as "A Framework for Educational Planning in a Multicultural Society". He distinguished five types of programme, each aimed at a different target population:

| *Programme* | *Target Population* |
|---|---|
| Migrant Education | "Off - the - boat" groups. Continue education in own language. Intensive English. |
| Minority Education | All children of non-English background. Includes B.L. programmes of different types. |
| Minority-Lang. Education | All children in part. community. |
| M.C. Education | All children. |
| Foreign-Lang. Education | All children. |

To us at pre-school level, the first dimension, "Migrant Education", is in *one* sense inapplicable, since pre-school entrants cannot be considered to have previously started their formal "education". On the other hand, it is perhaps highly *applicable*, as the child of non-English-speaking parents may come to pre-school or day-care centre as ignorant of English as if he were just "off the jet". Just as is the case with the older school child arriving from the home country, his cognitive development perforce has to slow down while he learns the new language, English. I think we in the pre-school field need to grapple more realistically [illegible] this problem in two ways: by examining the feasibility of some B.L. pre-school programmes using the B.L. teachers we already have, and by actively recruiting into training more B.L. students, whether young or mature-aged.

There is no doubt that Australia's immigration programme, with its multiplicity of nationalities, does pose us different problems from those (say) in the U.S.A., where a very large percentage of non-English-speaking immigrants are Spanish-speaking, so that many different types of Headstart and other pre-school programmes have been able to incorporate a bilingual and/or bicultural approach. During her visit to Australia last year, early childhood educator Dr. Carolyn Stern commented on the added complexities presented by our immigration programme. The typical inner suburban day-care centre or kindergarten in Melbourne has many different nationalities; Boroondara Kindergarten in North Richmond alone has twenty-one different nationalities in a double-unit kindergarten. Possibly Israel is the only modern nation whose experience parallels our own, followed by Canada, whose resident bilingual situation has been compounded by post-war immigration, particularly in large industrial cities such as Toronto.

Because of our unique situation in Australia, bilingual programmes are often not possible, but we do have clustering in districts, as shown by primary schools such as Richmond Central, which is predominantly Greek, and Richmond West, which is substantially Turkish.

For example, a survey carried out in the Hawthorn Inspectorate of the Victorian Education Department showed that Richmond Central Primary School had 257 Greek pupils, followed by eighty Anglos, only sixteen Yugoslavs and minute numbers of other nationalities. I think this clearly indicates the time is ripe for us to approach the ethnic communities concerned to see whether bilingual pre-schools in Greek/English and Turkish/English are feasible.

Despite what I have just said about Australia's uniqueness, we can still draw on a great deal of American experience with B.L. pre-school programmes. The Institute had hoped to have received permission from America in time to reproduce for this conference part of an Office of Child Development Topical Paper entitled "Early Childhood Programs for non-English-Speaking Children". Unfortunately, permission has still not been received, but I urge you to watch for this really useful and practical document which will come out as soon as possible as an Occasional Paper from the Institute. It asks the common questions that Australian teachers are asking: Does one language interfere with another? Does bilingualism help or hinder intellectual development? What are the relationships between early bilingualism and emotional development? In each case, the paper endeavours to present the most up-to-date research on the topic.

Part of my own viewpoint on the subject of "interference" is that when teachers worry about this phenomenon, they are often in reality referring to the fact that a child may have poor skills in any language at all.

I am very concerned about a recent newspaper article about a paper delivered by Mrs. Val Boyd at the ANZAAS Conference and reported under headlines such as "English Lack at Home Blamed" (Melbourne *Sun*, 11/5/76). The point made is that "children . . . of Italian and Greek origin had greatest difficulty with English . . . because not enough English was spoken in their homes" (Melbourne *Age*, 11/5/76).

I have not seen Mrs. Boyd's study, but I am concerned that the headlines "turn back the clock" as far as a recognition of the importance of first-language maintenance is concerned. There is ample research such as that of Lambert in Canada suggesting that bilinguals can be *advantaged*, both in terms of cognitive development and educational achievement. A child whose parents talk to him in rich and fluent Greek or Italian will develop concepts much more easily than a child whose parents speak a kind of migrant-pidgin English. Surely we can throw off the "tyranny of distance" and recall that educated Europeans and Asians are probably *multilingual*. It is our task to ensure that children of immigrant parents become fluent, balanced bilinguals rather than leaving them lost in a kind of "linguistic limbo" without adequate skills in any language.

Now, this clearly suggests to me that we need to do some rethinking on the subject of teaching English as a second language. Do we need to plan more structured E.S.L. experiences for our pre-school children of non-Anglo background? Controversial, but my answer is emphatically yes!

As I have already said, one of the factors that distinguishes Australia's situation from other multilingual nations is the enormous range of cultures and languages here. Now, whether we believe that the child acquires language through reinforcement (such as attention and praise from his adult caretakers), or whether through an unfolding of biologically determined structures, the fact remains that the building blocks of language, such as sounds and words, have to be learned by imitation—and for imitation to take place, frequent presentation is necessary for a child to attach meaning to particular sounds, words and phrases.

We cannot assume that a kindergarten with (say) two English-speaking adults and a handful of Anglo children can provide sufficient models for a non-English-speaking child. A further complication is that of socio-economic class. Most immigrants are in lower-class areas, and without entering (for example) into the Bernstein-Labov controversy about the validity of non-standard English, I think there is sufficient evidence to show that a child who has learned lower-class English is less likely to succeed in the school system than one who freely speaks the same middle-class variety as the teacher. An excellent article in the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* of the Victorian Education Department by Des. Pickering, entitled "The Playground—A Natural Language Laboratory?" makes these issues very clear.

One of my "peak experiences" as a worker in the educational field was at Goodwood Pre-School in Adelaide, South Australia, last year. I had the opportunity to watch Fran Bailey, who is one of the most outstanding teachers I've seen, conduct a fifteen-minute E.S.L. session with four-year-olds. Her methods were direct and experiential, and adapted to pre-school level. We all sat around and ate bread and jam, honey or Vegemite as everyone's enthusiasm mounted. We nearly wept when a newcomer who'd cried for three days since starting kindergarten, left the session with a broad smile, pointing at a poster on the wall and saying, "It's ice-cream!"

These are ideas for us to consider for the immediate future, as might also be Matthews's fifth type of programme, viz., foreign language education. Evidence of Anglo parent demand for F.L. instruction at school level exists; for instance, parents are enrolling their four-year-old children in Italian classes at Scopo Bookshop in Carlton. At Albert Park Primary School, where Greek is taught to all Greek children, Anglo parents are demanding that *their* children be included in this "privileged instruction".

At the moment the main thrust of teachers' interests at pre-school level is in the direction of multicultural education. To return to the question of what multicultural education is, Matthews reminds us that the term has been much bandied about . . . "used sometimes to mean the education of non-English-speaking children, sometimes to mean the education of children from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and at other times to mean . . . well, one hardly knows most of the time. Yet multicultural education has a clear meaning and a clear relationship to other approaches.

"Multicultural education is about multiculturalism and in a multicultural society it is those programs intended to convey to all children within that society the multicultural nature of the society that they live in." (P. W. Matthews, 1975.)

He makes it clear that M.C. education is not only for inner-suburban children—it is also for outer-suburban and rural children, who must learn the reality of their own society. He notes at least five inter-related points of focus in M.C. education programmes. These should be concerned with:

1. Fostering values which support multiculturalism.
2. Reducing intergroup tensions, prejudices and discrimination.
3. Showing, particularly in history, geography, social studies and the like, the reality of multiculturalism in Australia.
4. Showing the unique contributions that each and all ethnic groups have made to Australia.
5. Developing in the child a sense of security and personal worth in being a member of a culturally plural society.

These should be regarded as our aims. Children in Templestowe and Timboon can learn to sing a Turkish song, or taste an Italian pizza, or listen to an Arabic fairy tale just as can children from Coburg or Fitzroy. Most important of all—what aspects of their national culture would members of ethnic communities like included in the Australian educational system? We will not find out unless we ask.

Our approach should be seen as sensitivity training, rather than looking at "quaint and curious customs," as Tom Lehrer called them. In the past I think we have applied too rigidly the notion that a pre-school child can only cope with his immediate experience. We have learned that a very young child can be aware that different languages exist, and we have found that children will listen to a story in another language for the sheer pleasure of unfamiliar sounds. I think here we have a real chance to combat prejudice before it begins, to foster the idea that "black is beautiful", and Turkish and Croatian are beautiful, and Maltese and Polish are beautiful too, so that hearing a foreign language in a train or a bus provokes a reaction of interest rather than hostility. I'm interested in fostering the idea that accented English is beautiful, too. One of the tapes I'm producing will include a selection of stories from different nationalities—told in English by someone from that nationality.

I know that some of you will react to my statement about Turkish songs by saying, "Yes, but where can we obtain suitable material?" Many of you are already using your most valuable resource, the parents, to provide songs, stories, poems from their own memory, either by talking to children face to face or by making tapes. Even the most WASPish middle-class kindergarten must have some Dutch, German or other parents born outside Australia. Grandparents too are an enormously valuable resource. Limurru Cottage, a day-care centre run by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence in Fitzroy, employs a "token nanny", selected because of her love of talking to children. Immigrant grandparents have been induced to attend some basic literacy classes at kindergartens in Canberra, with the motivation that they will be "able to read to their grandchildren". Pre-schools are wonderful places for establishing the kind of trust that is necessary for successful language classes.

Tapes and written material collected from parents are being shared by kindergartens in Melbourne through the F.K.U. Resource Centre organised by Heather Moorhead, which also arranges monthly meetings for teachers to hear speakers and share resources.

An attempt to provide material on a larger scale is being made through the Multicultural Resource Project which I am working on this year. This involves a year's funding given to me by the Children's Commission to produce cassette tapes for children three to eight years in six major ethnic languages: Italian, Greek, Turkish, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian—and I've since added Arabic.

Many of you know about this project and have assisted my work, particularly Priscilla Clarke from Boroondara Kindergarten in North Richmond. For those of you who are not familiar with the project, I'd like to spell out some of its aims again. The project is concerned with language retention and cultural retention for ethnic minority children, and with cultural sharing or interchange between Anglo and E.M. children. We are using traditional and modern songs, stories, nursery rhymes and so on from all seven languages (including English), and are arranging reciprocal translation so that—as well as, say, Greek children hearing Aesop's fables in Greek—Italian, Serbian, Egyptian and Anglo children can hear Aesop's fables in *their* own language too.

The sort of English-language material we're trying out in translation includes traditional nursery rhymes and stories such as "The Gingerbread Man" and "Little Red Hen". We're also translating some good contemporary material, some of it written by I.E.C.D. students and staff, including some stories with urban settings from the *Kidsbooks* series, edited by I.E.C.D. lecturers June Rogers (Factor) and Gwenda McKay. I'm particularly delighted that Penguin Books have given permission for "The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek", by Jenny Wagner, to be translated and used in this study.

I'm endeavouring to use ethnic material which is genuinely part of the children's culture in that community. As much as possible, I'm using parents as informants, though I've had some very substantial help from academics and librarians.

I don't always find it easy to get the sort of material I want, material which combines some essential national character with an approach to early childhood which Australian teachers would find acceptable. But I am always overwhelmed by the co-operation of people from the different ethnic communities when they are approached to share their national culture. For many adults who came here as immigrants, this is the first time that their own language and culture have been regarded as valuable by Australian society. Ethnic radio is only a year old! I think we forget how much one's language and heritage is part of one's own identity, or self-concept, and to have it devalued by the host community is cultural and psychological aggression of a very powerful kind.

I think it's important to emphasise that not all members of ethnic minorities have the same attitude to bilingual or multicultural educational programmes. To make this assumption is to believe that all non-English-speaking individuals come from this amorphous country called "Migrania"—an assumption similar to the one which says that "if they don't understand you, shout louder." Some ethnic minority parents are concerned that English is the key to success, and that educational institutions should not concern themselves with minority languages. Other parents have had such a history of personal trauma before emigrating to Australia that they want to wipe the slate clean and let their children start afresh as Australians pure and simple. We have to recognise many other differences in family relationships, expectations about education and so on, and accord to these attitudes the sort of "unconditional acceptance and regard" that Carl Rogers talked about as the basis of good human relations. It's the sort of acceptance that doesn't necessarily mean agreement or approval, but which creates a climate in which dialogue can begin. We all have to bend a little, and adjust our values a little, in order to get the "creative interaction" that Smolicz talked about. The question of value adjustment is brought home to me very clearly and frequently in selecting material for the Multicultural Resource Project. What do we decide about traditional stories which seem excessively nationalistic, or moralistic, or religious, for our purposes? I have collected a delightful Arabic story about Queen Zaynab, who had no hands. How long since a modern children's story had a protagonist who is physically handicapped?

Modern theories of child care have made us seek to reduce stress on the child, including stresses in children's literature, so that much reading for young children is excessively bland. A recent article by Bruno Bettelheim on "The Uses of Enchantment" goes so far as to describe most children's books as "so shallow that little of significance can be gained from them." He refers to their "safe" themes which "never mention death or aging, neither the limits to our existence nor the wish for eternal life". Yet these are crucial existential problems, which concern even very young children. Bettelheim goes on to say that the folk fairy tale, by contrast, "confronts the child squarely with the basic human predicaments". "Nothing," he says, "in the entire range of 'children's literature'—with rare exceptions, can be as enriching and satisfying to child and adult alike as the folk fairy tale. True, fairy tales teach little overtly about the specific conditions of life in modern mass society; these tales were created long before modern society came into being. But from them a child can learn more about the inner problems of man, and about solutions to his own (and our) predicaments in any society, than he can from any other type of story within his comprehension."

Perhaps some of us may have an immediate reaction, "but these stories are 'too old' for young children". Now this is one of our present-day Anglo attitudes which is being challenged by the different cultures in our midst. Many non-Anglo cultures do not have a separate "culture of childhood" as we do. Twenty years ago my husband worked on the factory floor at G.M.H. and when, say, the trade union branch would turn on a traditional Australian "niner" party, *everybody* in the Greek and Italian families would come: grandma, babies, teen-aged daughters, little kids—everybody!

In a similar vein, my experience in asking many informants about "stories specially for children" often gets a mystified look—"but everybody listens to the same stories". Of course there are some exceptions—I believe that in the Greek villages the travelling shadow puppets are for "men and boys only". Women's ears are presumably too tender for Karagioz's broad and phallic humour!

I think that rigid ideas about what is "suitable" for young children are not found only in Western society, as a result of brainwashing by so-called "experts". I've been very disappointed when talking to "trained infant teachers" from, e.g., Spain and Turkey, to find that what is considered "suitable" music for young children has the same ersatz quality of our worst examples—"the three little ducks go, etc. etc." I call it semolina music—it's bloody awful but it's good for you. Unfortunately, formal education, like urbanisation, consumerism, the puritan work-ethic and many other aspects of modern industrial society, can sometimes emasculate its culture and its people.

Dr. Smolicz's speech, which I referred to earlier, postulates more than academic challenges to us, as far as establishing "creative interaction" is concerned. He throws the ball right back at us, as individuals, in terms of what he calls our own willingness to reorganise our personal patterns of life, to incorporate certain elements of ethnic cultures. The sort of reorganisation he's thinking of goes rather beyond sampling a bit of ethnic food or cooking.

I know that in the three months I have been working on the M.C.R.P. I have been personally challenged on many counts. I've sometimes felt like a voyeur, as, for example, in witnessing the demoralisation of a couple of Turkish teachers working in factories in the northern suburbs. Observing the Greek grannies in the security of their children's homes, rocking the baby and so on, has made me think hard about some of my attitudes towards my own parents. I've had to re-examine my own patterns of hospitality as I've met increasingly large numbers of immigrants who have never been inside an old Australian's home or met their family. I've cringed when a distinguished Moslem scholar, now at an Australian C.A.E., told me how he wept in his hotel room, night after night, because none of his colleagues offered him hospitality during his first lonely months in Australia.

On the other hand, I can hardly describe the joyous sense of empathy and good feelings that have come from laughing together with people who've told me fruity Macedonian curses, or dubious Arabic songs ("that would NEVER do for the children"), or who've sung marvellous Chilean lullabies about babies with dirty bottoms. I also think that I really only started to regard Turks as human beings when I was told some of their jokes about Nasreddin Hodja, and realised how much similarity there is between Turkish and Australian sense of humour.

One of the things I'm delighted about is that my extensive overseas correspondence has made it possible for me to arrange contributions from Australian children to a U.N.I.C.E.F. publication due to come out in 1977, a collection of children's jokes and cartoons from all over the world called "Laughing Together".

We at pre-school level are in a position to pioneer a great deal of work in the field of multicultural education, as we're proud to feel we've pioneered many innovations for the benefit of children in the past. Our buildings and playrooms are open to parents and community in a way that primary schools still find difficult to achieve. The essence of M.C.E. is that it is a joint *giving* and *sharing* by parents and educators alike of some of the things they most value, rather than an imposition of some trendy philosophy like open classrooms, whether anyone wants them or not.

# Home Support Programmes

## Toy Libraries for Handicapped Children

By ANNETINE FORELL*

THE FIRST TOY LIBRARY was begun in Sweden in 1963, with support from the Swedish Scouts and Guides Association, under the leadership of two psychologists, both parents of handicapped children.

This new kind of advisory service began with, in part, quite different functions from traditional agencies. Under unconventional conditions they wanted to advise families (who kept their children at home) how to activate the retarded child and provide such play activity and educational stimulation to help, as far as possible, further the development of the child —and, through this positive encouragement, help parents cope with the feelings of loneliness, dissatisfaction and guilt.

This pioneering service soon developed extensive training programmes, not only for persons in charge of toy libraries, which were soon formed in other parts of Sweden, but also for training in early child development of the handicapped for physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, etc. The counselling of parents has been one of the central activities of the service.

The first toy library for handicapped children in the United Kingdom was started in September, 1967, by a group of parents belonging to the Enfield Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. Following a number of articles in professional journals and in the press in 1969, the idea spread widely in the United Kingdom and now there are toy libraries for handicapped children in a number of centres throughout the country. The English Toy Library Association was subsequently formed to encourage setting up of toy libraries, to foster understanding of the play needs of handicapped children and give guidance on the selection of good toys and play materials, and to promote work for and maintain communication between individual toy libraries, professional workers, manufacturers and designers, and societies for the handicapped.

From these beginnings the toy library idea has spread through Scandinavia, Europe, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

### PHILOSOPHY

Handicapped children need toys and equipment that will be of therapeutic value to them in overcoming their physical, mental, emotional and perceptual disabilities. Because of their inability to explore and experiment independently in the way normal children do, they tend to be slow in developing even those faculties they have and in their social and emotional development. Thus handicapped children need a greater number and variety of toys, specially designed and appropriate for their particular stage of development, to bring them intriguing and challenging learning experiences and to give them legitimate outlets for their frustrations, fantasies and self-expression.

But just to lend toys and play-tools is not the real aim of the toy library. Play needs not to be separated into sections of a young child's life, but needs to be incorporated into most of his or the family's daily activities. We should be aware that most children need *time* to play as well as an inducing atmosphere. Children who spend many hours in car seats, high chairs, infant chairs, baby bouncers and other devices which restrict the patterns of normal movement often have little time during the day when they can move and play freely. Natural play material often means more to a young child than adult-oriented toys (as anyone who has tried to rake up fallen leaves will tell you). Dirt, rocks, sticks, water, seedpods, pets, people, plants, insects, even specks of fluff and food (which provides an all-encompassing range of tactile experiences) need to be investigated and explored until their qualities and limitations are familiar before the child moves on to structured manipulative equipment and pencil-and-paper tasks. Other young and old companions frequently provide mutual enjoyment to each other and create the necessity for communication.

The person who plays with young children generates an atmosphere often based on his/her own personal philosophies. Consciously or otherwise, the person who has a degree of spontaneity, honesty, fearlessness and self-trust may promote those qualities in the children with whom he/she co-operates in a play situation. A relaxed co-operative attitude tends to promote a relaxed co-operative attitude.

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We see the toys as a means of communication between us and the parents and the parent and child.

To find potential abilities within every section of the child's actual level of development does not only require a good contact with the child and his parents; knowledge of the normal child's developmental phases is necessary as well as an understanding of the parents' needs.

We do not ask anything of the parents — most parents are already committed to schools or institutions and are often under a great deal of stress. We feel it is important there is a place where no demands are made.

Parents are free to come when they like, without appointment. Having operated for four years, we notice many parents come very often during periods of stress—these periods may last several months or a few weeks and do recur.

## DEVELOPMENT IN VICTORIA —AUSTRALIA

In June, 1971, a public meeting was called in Caulfield, and as a result of that meeting, a management committee was elected comprising a wide range of professional skills and interests, and arrangements were made for the use of premises. Noah's Ark Toy Library was launched.

The toy library was officially opened on 5th November, 1971, by the Minister of Health, Mr. Rossiter. The library opened in one room in Caulfield and moved in 1973 to a house owned by Prahran College of Advanced Education—we filled that house and overflowed, and are now in a large, renovated eight-room Victorian house at 28 The Avenue, Windsor.

Toy libraries for handicapped children are now operating in Tasmania, New South Wales, Canberra, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and a library is being planned in the Northern Territory.

The first National Conference was held in Melbourne in 1974 and the next is to be in Canberra on 20th August.

## FUNCTIONS

The library serves any child of any age with any handicaps. The basic and most important function of the Noah's Ark Toy Library is to provide a relaxed, tension-free, non-clinical atmosphere where parents can have support and advice about play and play activities.

Much of the training of young handicapped children must be done by the parents at home and the toy libraries bring invaluable help to the parents of handicapped children. The toy libraries bring together parents with similar problems and in this way they can share their experiences in handling their children and gain considerable support by feeling that other families in the community are facing similar problems. We aim to make available a wide range of high-quality toys and equipment, all of it professionally recommended and some professionally commissioned. Handicapped children are even more unpredictable with toys than normal children and inevitably there is a large failure rate with the use of particular toys. Parents cannot afford to buy unlimited quantities of toys in the hope of finding some that will be suitable for their children. Parents can come to the toy library, discuss with the professional staff the most suitable toys for their children and then borrow the appropriate toys from the library. They can then use the toys at home, the toys remaining the property of the toy library. If the toy or piece of equipment is particularly suitable for the child, then the parents, if they wish, can buy a similar toy through the normal retail channels.

The Noah's Ark Toy Library is open from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. five days a week and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month. Parents are free to call in, stay for five minutes or all day—we have a great kitchen and the kettle is always boiling.

We have an O.T., June Hayes, who is the country co-ordinator. June looks after the mobile library—a VW Kombi. We realise the parents who can come to Prahran are in a minority, so the van visits outer Melbourne and country areas on a regular basis.

We visit a parent's home, and other parents in the area meet us there—this enables parents in the same area to get to know each other and form, in most cases, local supportive groups. We see the library as a catalyst in this area—and usually it leads to other things.

Once parents talk about their mutual needs and problems, as a group they have more power to, e.g., approach their local council for day care or salary for a physio or perhaps writing to the supermarket to allow mothers of handicapped children to take pushers through the turnstiles.

We go to an area on request and at present visit Greensborough, Footscray, Coburg, St. Albans, Altona, Williamstown, Gladstone Park, Oakleigh, Nunawading, Dandenong, Mt. Evelyn, Ballarat, and Shepparton. A branch of Noah's Ark Toy Library is established at Geelong.

June corresponds with country parents, who initially fill out a basic assessment chart of their child's abilities. Toys are sent, and we have liaison with New Zealand Education Department correspondence section, who allow us to reprint their expertly written and very valuable information sheets on specific topics.

The library has 1,020 members throughout Victoria. Sixty-five special schools, institutions, hospitals, clinics and playgroups use the facilities and resources of the library to supplement and/or enrich their programmes and activities. We feel that the facilities offer much to children with learning disabilities, or those who are environmentally deprived.

The library does not act as a bottomless pit but as a resource and encourages comments and criticism—the schools then buy what they find invaluable.

Groups are able to visit the library by appointment. Many groups, e.g. Janefield, Kingsbury, come on a regular basis each week; the library is a focus for an outing—a place where the children are accepted. Allambie and St. Gabriel's bring children for stimulation and play, and we have a group of mothers of normal children who come to play with the same child each time the child visits.

We are able to devise play stimulation programmes for severely handicapped children in institutions.

We have four library-run groups: Movement (to establish communication), Play, Hobby, Speech Stimulation (which provides opportunities for mothers to have basic speech advice). The library also runs a holiday playgroup.

Other services that have developed include:

—Reference library for parents.
—Activity books for children.
—Records (for borrowing).
—Books on cassettes and tape recorders (can be borrowed).
—Language-stimulation picture library.
—The production of a Newsletter four times per year.

The library employs a maintenance man who makes prototypes of ideas. This is very exciting, and ideas come bubbling up—so many children we see are physically three, four, five, six, and developmentally at a much lower level. This presents a challenge.

The library is a resource for people and groups throughout Australia wanting to establish similar services—and we are beginning in-service training apart from the already existing commitment to O.T. students, child-care students and others.

There is a photographic reference index of all the equipment in the library and our catalogue of equipment will be produced within three months.

This is an outline of some of the functions of the library.

There are few rules:

—Parents may borrow three toys at a time for a month.
—Groups borrow ten toys for a month.
—Country members keep toys for two months.

## FUNDING

Initially the library was entirely voluntary and funded by donations. Then, as we were classed as providing training and were open five days a week, we qualified under the Handicapped Children's Act and Social Security and received:

—1–1 salaries.
—4–1 for equipment.

Last November, after a long, arduous and exhausting battle, we received government funding, 90 per cent. from the Hospital and Health Services Commission and 10 per cent. from the State Health Department. We are assured this is continuing funding. The gap between what we asked for and what we got is at present inadequately filled by voluntary donations.

In 1972 we spent approximately $1,500 on initial stock and equipment. Since that time, we plan to, and do, spend approximately $300 a month on new toys and equipment and replacement. This sum does not include day-to-day expenses and overheads, organisation and staffing.

At Noah's Ark Toy Library we have a multidisciplinary team, both full- and part-time staff, consisting of six occupational therapists, three physiotherapists, two speech therapists, two social workers, one community nurse, equipment officer, administrator and a librarian.

In addition, at Noah's Ark Toy Library we have part-time clerical and cleaning staff and a maintenance man who makes prototypes of toys for special needs. We also have the valuable support of many voluntary helpers.

When a parent comes to the library, toys are returned to the office to be checked and the parent's comments are recorded. The parent and child are then introduced to the O.T. or physio and can spend as much time as they like.

## CATALOGUING AND MAINTENANCE

The toy library carries a stock of educational toys which will help the child to improve in observation, manual co-ordination and other pre-reading and prewriting skills. It provides creative and stimulating material and toys which will encourage the child's imagination, social confidence and speech, and help the child to join in with family games and activities to overcome some of the isolation and overprotection to which handicapped children are so often subject.

Some toys are imported—from Sweden, America, England; others are bought locally or specially made.

We have 4,000 toys, plus books, records, pictures and tapes in stock, and they are catalogued according to function — we use a loose-leaf accession register.

The following categories are used:

*A for Activity*
(1) Suitable for walkers as well as non-walkers.
(2) For walkers and climbers only.

*B for Baby Play*
(1) Sense-stimulating toys (pre-handling).
(2) First-handling and pushing toys.

*C for Co-ordination*
(1) Fitting, threading, screwing, turning, hammering, steering and balancing toys.
(2) Insets and jigsaws.
(3) Construction.
(4) Special skills.

*D for Discrimination*
(1) Visual (matching, sorting, grading).
(2) Auditory (musical instruments).
(3) Tactile.
(4) Spatial relation—body image.

*E for Expression (imagination and speech)*
(1) Creative.
(2) Fantasy.
(3) Language.

### EQUIPMENT

F1, F2, F3.
Table Games.

All toys are catalogued under the above headings, and numbering in each section follows on consecutively, e.g. A1 No. 6 trolley, A1 No. 7 go-cart. Other details recorded are date of purchase, manufacturer's name and cost to us. Each toy has a card, on the front of which is recorded toy number, hire cost and toy cost. On the back of this toy-card is recorded all details of the toy, name, number of pieces, instructions included, etc. The toy itself and pieces belonging to it are marked with its own number, for which we use a fine-tipped black spirit-based pen. After cataloguing, all toys are cross-referenced.

Each toy has an accession number. For example, D.IM–66A means D for Discrimination, IM for Matching; in this type of toy it is No. 66; A means it is the second of the same toy; B would mean it is the third copy.

Equipment ranges from rattles to climbing-frames to telescopes.

### THE FUTURE

Toy libraries have proved invaluable overseas in the training and development of physically and mentally handicapped children and have given practical counselling, instruction and support to their parents. The Toy Library Movement meets certain needs of handicapped children which are not being adequately covered by existing services and further development of the movement is expected both here in Australia and overseas.

We feel it is very important for people involved with planning and establishing toy libraries to think through philosophies, objectives, staffing, funding, integration with existing services *before* they begin. Often toy libraries are mooted in an area when, after discussion, it has been found there are more pressing needs, e.g., day-care relief.

The Noah's Ark Toy Library can act as a catalyst—we would be very happy for you to visit and see what we are trying to do. The follow-on from this introduction is a one-day seminar on Running a Toy Library on 25th June in Melbourne. There will be a National Conference in Canberra on 20th August and an International Conference in March, 1978, in London.

## Essendon Toy Library

By Sister HELEN RHEUME*

A YOUNG CHILD's business is PLAY for *learning* and for *leisure.*

A toy collection is associated with the Moonee Valley Regional Library. This pilot toy library was opened on 25th March, 1975.

One hundred children within the age range of 1-8 years were enrolled. The children were selected from a waiting-list to give an even distribution over age and over the location of wards in the City of Essendon. The membership now stands at 536, with a waiting list of over 100.

Play materials such as puzzles, manipulative toys and games are available. Borrowing is free and each child may borrow one toy at a time for a period of up to a month. Parents are held responsible for the loss of a toy, but not damage. Volunteers repair toys.

A play period from 3.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. each day and from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday has been arranged to cater for children on the waiting-list. Volunteers in the community are available at these times to explain the function and purpose of the various educational materials.

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* Sister Helen Rheume is a member of the Management Committee of the Essendon Toy Library, Essendon, Victoria.

At the toy library there is opportunity for social interaction wherein children learn from each other where the activity is associated with language. Children learn by discussing what they are doing or viewing. Here likewise introductions are simply proffered, i.e., a young child asking another, "Can I play?" and the reply, "My name's Claire!"

Toys are classified by function and age-level and the toy stock has been entered in the library's computerised catalogue. A 4:1 ratio of toys to borrowers is maintained to ensure that children returning toys have a choice of toys within their interest and skill level and to provide stock on the shelves for supervised play periods. Stock has been purchased by a volunteer experienced in child development and learning.

Funding for the toy library has been provided by the Library Council of Victoria, through the regional development grant and the Quota Club of Essendon.

The Quota Club is a women's service club which called a public meeting at the Essendon Public Library on 5th September, 1974, to discuss establishing a toy library. It has since presented submissions to Western Region Council for Social Development, Westudy and the Regional Library. For this pilot programme a budget of $4,000 was allocated.

Only children with special toy-library borrowers' cards are permitted to take toys home. Book-borrowers' cards do not cover toys. Parents can obtain special toy-library registration cards from the readers' adviser.

While children of migrant families, by playing in the toy library, could gain some early acquisition of English, it would be helpful if volunteer supervisors were likewise bilingual.

The Essendon Toy Library is extending its service because the Management Committee realises that a child's future is NOW!

# The Young Child and his Family

By Dr. ANNE SILCOCK*

**Family backgrounds:** Gordon (1975) says, "Child-rearing is not a thing apart but reflects the economic, political and social system and prepares the child to fit into that system. . . . It is the subtle patterns of adult-child interactions which teach the child his culture, its style, language and gesture."

In many countries the adult responsible for socialising the child into the ways of his culture is not the biological mother. Regretfully, time does not permit an exploration of the diverse patterns of child-rearing that exist throughout the world, of the relative authority and responsibility of the family and the State, of the composition and structure of the child's primary group, the roles of the biological father and mother, and so on.

In Western countries a child's natural parents are his legal guardians and responsible for rearing him. The nuclear family comprises the child-rearing setting for the majority of Australian children. The State seldom intervenes in the upbringing of children, even though they may be neglected or abused by their parents. An exception is found in the case of poor families who receive State aid and must therefore consent to home visits by departmental officers. When parents are so grossly negligent that the State is forced to intervene, the children are charged with being neglected children. The State does not assume full responsibility for children unless they lose their parents or are not wanted by them, or unless they are persistent lawbreakers. In the latter case society tends to hold the family responsible for the behaviour of the children until adulthood. Alternative child-care provisions made by the State tend to be woefully inadequate and of inferior standard. Fortunately, the majority of Australian parents willingly accept the responsibility for rearing their children and devote many years of their lives to them.

There are many ways in which to rear a child and it has yet to be clearly established which is the "best" way. Is the same pattern of child-rearing "best" for all children in a given culture? Burton White says that infants thrive under a wide variety of conditions. In Western countries there seem to be some generally accepted "givens" which are thought to be essential for development — a mothering person or persons, a minimum level of stimulation and exploration, a minimum amount of language interaction, and minimum nutritional and health care. Just what these minimums are is not yet fully known, but the effects of deprivation are evident in many of our children.

I believe that Gordon's words are particularly relevant here in Australia at the present time, when the uncertainties inherent in our economic environment and the pressures for change in our social environment are putting such strain on the family that ever-increasing numbers of young children are left fatherless, or sometimes motherless, not because of the unavoidability of early death of one of the parents, but through the break-up of marriages. Many newborn infants begin life without a father.

There are a number of guidance officers in my Masters' course in Advanced Developmental Psychology. They tell me that in some of the schools to which they are attached up to thirty per cent of the children come from one-parent families—homes that are unlikely to be able to provide the conditions thought to be necessary for full development.

Research findings indicate that two functioning parents are better than one. Failure to establish a stable husband-wife relationship and/or a low level of parental acceptance of and involvement in child-rearing, have negative effects upon the children. Rutter's (1971) research on behaviour problems of boys suggests that the father may have an influence on child development comparable to that of the mother.

Nye (1957) found that children from unhappy, unbroken homes were more maladjusted than children from broken homes. Marriages break up for a variety of reasons and each leaves its special mark upon the sons and daughters of the marriage. Broken homes occur more frequently in the backgrounds of delinquents and children suffering from emotional disorders.

The absence of the same-sex parent appears to be significantly related to maladjustment in both boys and girls. Santrock (1973) found that father-absent boys consistently performed worse than father-absent girls and father-present boys on tests of cognitive development. He found that the loss of the father through death was more disruptive at age six and above, whilst loss by divorce, desertion and separation were more detrimental in the first five years of life. If the mother remarried, the presence of a step-father before five years of age had a positive effect on the boy's life.

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Research findings suggest that girls from father-absent homes are more likely to have emotional problems, to encounter school maladjustment and to engage in anti-social "acting out" than girls from intact families. Daughters of widows tended to be shy and withdrawn, and to avoid close proximity to male peers and adults. In contrast, daughters of divorcees, whilst also anxious, tended to seek out male peers constantly, at the expense of girl friends.

These research studies cited are merely the tip of the iceberg of young lives that have been damaged or deformed by the stress and uncertainty of changing social conditions.

Schaefer (1974) points out that both empirical data and psychological theory indicate the desirability of broadening our analysis of child development to include mother-father-child interactions and the network of family relationships amongst father, mother, child and siblings. Sutton-Smith and Rosenberg (1970) found increased masculinity, nonconformity, aggressiveness and physicalness in both boys and girls with older brothers. Langdon *et al* (1975) found that the presence of a big brother had an activating, stabilising effect on younger brothers, but an activating, conflict-inducing effect on younger sisters, who showed self-esteem problems.

One of the most promising outcomes of Project Head Start is the current focus of attention in the U.S. on the home, as the first and most important influence on the growth and development of the children. Home-centred programmes have been devised to help lower-class mothers improve their parenting skills and general effectiveness in their environments so that they may provide upgraded learning opportunities for their children.

I would now like to turn to some of the experiences that are considered to be of crucial importance for the full development of children under three, and look at ways in which families may provide the kinds of conditions which are likely to foster optimal development in their children. In passing, I want to mention that we are only now beginning to understand some of the *pre-natal determinants* of behaviour and development: the way in which the mother-to-be influences the development of her unborn child through her own health and nutritional habits, drug intake, persistent strong emotional states, her feelings towards her husband and her life-style in general, and her pregnancy in particular.

## THE NEONATE AND YOUNG INFANT

Currently, the newborn child is considered to be a remarkably competent individual who is responsive to his surroundings and is endowed with considerable ability to gather and process information from his environment. From birth he is capable of determining, in part, his own life experiences, and the adults who care for him must take cognisance of his particular needs and his unique individuality.

The research of developmental psychologists such as Newson (1974) and Trevarthen (1974) suggests that the neonate is "pre-tuned" to people in his environment, rather than to objects, that he is sensitive to person-mediated events as these co-ordinate in a predictable manner with his own spontaneous actions, and that he uses different strategies in his dealings with people and with objects.

Hutt and Hutt (1968) point out that artificial sounds which share characteristics of adult speech seem to be particularly attractive to neonates, and three-dimensional mobile objects which share characteristics of the human face hold great interest for them. Condon and Sander (1974) have shown that key elements of communication are present in the gestures and patterns of bodily movement of neonates and the synchronisation of these with points of change in the sound patterns of adult speech. Synchronisation also occurred between the body movements of American newborns and a voice speaking Chinese, but not with disconnected vowels or random tapping sounds. They believe that by the time an infant begins to speak he may have already acquired the form and structure of the language.

The tiny infant, then, is especially aware of people in his environment. He is able to initiate interactions and to respond to the communications of adults. We know that the infant enters into this transactional situation with bodily needs that must be met. We believe that the infant also requires a close relationship and stimulation, together with continuity and consistency of care. Neonates differ from each other in innate capacity, in level of activity, in patterns of crying, in sucking actions, in general movement and in reactivity (Kessen).

What are some of the characteristics of the adults who care for them? Gordon (1975) says: "The parent, too, enters into the relationship with needs and with a far more extensive background, obviously, than the baby." Family attitudes towards child-rearing and towards the role of the baby in the family affect her behaviour. Her relationship with her husband and/or other family members, her self-esteem as a mother and a woman, her aspirations for herself and for the baby, even her attitude towards her in-laws—all of these are factors which help to determine the manner in which she carries out her mothering role and, in particular, her responsiveness to her infant.

Schaffer (1974) believes that, in the two-way relationship that develops between the caring adult and the infant, each must take into account the needs and characteristics of the other. He compares this reciprocal relationship to a ping-pong game where the moves of each partner are to some extent determined by the moves of the other.

Studies of smiling in young infants show that they are responsive to facial likenesses. From six weeks of age the infant will smile at a crude two-dot representation of eyes, but as he grows and develops, a more realistic presentation is necessary to elicit smiling. A human face is the most effective stimulus of all. Ambrose (1961) found that at 17-25 weeks general social smiling starts to decay and the infant begins to smile only at the care-giver.

It is generally accepted that towards the middle of the first year of life the infant appears to shift from being attached to people in general, to being *attached to one person*, or sometimes two or three people, in particular—the caregiver/s. Erikson believes that separation of the infant from its mother at this time can have highly adverse effects on the development of the infant. Through the satisfaction of physical needs and the concomitant feeling of psychological well-being, the infant develops trust in his surroundings, in his mother, and later in himself. Erikson sees this sense of trust as the foundation of healthy personality development.

There is little agreement in the child-development literature about the way in which the attachment between infant and mother occurs. However once this has been established, the infant shows signs of anxiety or distress at separation from his mother. For many infants, separation anxiety continues until the third birthday and they can tolerate only brief periods of separation from the mother. It is important to broaden the young child's *social contacts* during this time so that he becomes accustomed to other people and generalises the sense of trust to them. He thus becomes less dependent upon the physical presence of his mother. By the first birthday a clear boundary has been formed between the infant and other people and he behaves towards people in a highly specific and differentiated manner.

Infants of mothers who are responsive to their cries and sensitive to their needs, and who play the kinds of games which require sustained reciprocal social interactions (e.g. peek-a-boo) are likely to be more attached to their mothers at twelve months of age than are the infants of less responsive mothers. Contrary to the popular belief that babies are "spoilt" by prompt maternal responsiveness to crying or by being nursed and cuddled freely, Ainsworth and Bell (1974) have shown that infants cared for in this way are content to be put down, cry less at twelve months of age and develop non-crying modes of communication, in contrast to babies who are not nursed "unnecessarily."

## THE INFANT AND YOUNG TODDLER

An important achievement during the second half of the first year is the development of *locomotion*, by one means or another. This enables the infant to take a much more active part in exploring his surroundings. He is attracted by novelty and his curiosity motivates him to handle, as well as inspect, objects now within his reach. The freedom to explore in safe surroundings is critical for cognitive development. Piaget stresses the importance of the young child's *self-initiated activity* through which he gains new experiences which increase the range and scope of his investigations. In this way the infant literally develops his own intelligence.

Hebb (1949) and others emphasise the cumulative nature of cognitive development. Later learning tends to utilise and build upon earlier learning, instead of replacing it. Consequently later learning may be accelerated or limited by the learning that has gone on before. If parents are made aware of this, they can structure the infant's early environment so as to facilitate learning experiences.

The increased mobility of the infant can be something of a trial to a busy mother. Locomotion, in conjunction with intense curiosity, poor control of the body, non-malicious destructiveness, the inabilty to anticipate danger and a lack of awareness of the rights and property of others can place a strain on all members of the family. Confining the active infant within a play-pen will tend to hinder his development by limiting opportunities for the input of information from his surroundings. Instead, mothers could suggest that everyone removes cherished possessions from his reach and that all increase their vigilance during this vital stage of development when the infant is learning about his environment.

Another developmental milestone is the acquisition of receptive *language* around eight or nine months of age, and of expressive language some time after the first birthday. The most exciting development during the second year of life, and the one with the most far-reaching implications is the young child's enormous progress in language. He begins to associate words with objects and to use words meaningfully. His speech becomes more complex and more comprehensible. This enables the infant to communicate with a greater degree of precision and to enter a new world of learning and understanding.

A responsive adult is crucial to the development of language. By engaging in reciprocal verbal play with the infant and by showing interest and approval of his early attempts at verbal communication, the mother reinforces these activities. By the careful selection of suitable words and phrases she provides a good model for imitation. By being aware of and exploiting the learning opportunities inherent in the young child's particular interests, the mother facilitates the acquisition of language which shapes the infant's basic orientation towards people and fosters his cognitive development.

Somewhere around eighteen months of age the infant begins to show a growing awareness of himself as a person in his own right, as an agent with a separate identity who can cause things to happen. This state of affairs typically ushers in the stage of *autonomy* or negativism. Vigorously the young child tries to do everything on his own: feed himself, walk across streets, run, dress himself, open and shut doors, drawers and cupboards to help himself to the contents. To be alive at this age means to thrust outwards aggressively, to act on one's own terms and to insist on one's own boundaries.

It is somewhat unfortunate that, in Western countries, the age of negativism coincides with the onset of socialisation training by the mother. She begins to make more insistent demands upon him in relation to toilet training, cleanliness, control of aggression, curtailment of freedom of movement and so on. She now expects him to wait until she is ready to attend to him and forbids activities which he finds enjoyable. Tension and conflict arise between care-giver and infant. Much of the time, even the gentlest suggestion or reminder seems to be met with a belligerent and unyielding "No!" from the infant. Sometimes he seems to refuse for the sake of refusing and he pits his will against that of the mother.

For the development of autonomy it is essential that the infant has opportunities to make choices and to exercise some control over his own activities. To do this, he needs the sympathetic guidance and graduated support of his care-giver. The parent's comfortable enjoyment of granting freedom in some areas, whilst maintaining firmness in others will be reflected in the young child's growing self-confidence and buoyant sense of *self-hood.*

Burton White believes that the period from ten to eighteen months, which encompasses mobility, language acquisition and the child's recognition of himself as an individual who can cause things to happen has the greatest influence on his later educational performance. Further, he states that "much of the basic quality of the entire life of an individual is determined by the mother's actions during the two years from twelve to thirty-six months".

## THE OLDER TODDLER

By two years of age the abilities of children have already taken shape and many of the basic formative experiences are well behind them. They continue to show a high level of intrinsic curiosity and are capable of more sophisticated social relationships, although they may be shy with strangers. Language competence and performance have increased dramatically and symbolic and role play make their appearance. Piaget believes that symbolic play prepares the child for the transition from sensori-motor to pre-occupational thought.

Two-year-olds show considerable precision in large-muscle skills and general bodily control. Their play with objects is characterised by the practice and subsequent refinement of skills, rather than by unrestricted exploration. Their interests change rapidly and their attention span is short. Two-year-olds seem to be bursting out in all directions simultaneously and in so doing they continue to test the patience and forebearance of their mothers.

Burton White (1974) says that mothers of young children usually have to cope with three major obstacles. They are: (1) ignorance of the job they have to do and of the stages of child development; (2) stress in coping with the incessant demands and impulsivity of the "under-threes"; and (3) lack of assistance—the mother usually faces this critically important period of development and early learning largely alone.

He makes some "best guesses" about the kinds of parental attitudes and behaviours most likely to help the young child reach his potential:

## PARENTAL ATTITUDES

1. *To life-style:* mothers who have positive attitudes towards their life-style, their husband and their children, and who feel reasonably happy and contented in their role in life.
2. *To young children:* mothers who really enjoy their children during the taxing and exhausting period of early childhood, who choose to spend time with them and involve themselves in their interests and activities.
3. *To early learning:* mothers who strongly believe in the importance of this period of development, who spontaneously grant their infants generous measures of attention and consideration.
4. *To physical surroundings:* mothers who temporarily remove valued possessions from the reach of young children and who adapt the lay-out of the house so as to avoid the necessity for continual rejoinders to "Don't touch!" at an age when children learn by touching.
5. *To a spick-and-span house:* immaculate housekeeping is incompatible with a curious, energetic, exploring and problem-solving infant.
6. *To safety:* during this age of active investigation and intellectual inquiry, a balance must be struck between stimulating opportunities for learning and the risk of physical injury. A buoyant trust

in the potentialities of the infant should be combined with an awareness of the possibilities for harm. The price of over-protection is stunted physical and intellectual growth.

## PARENTAL BEHAVIOURS

It is advantageous for development when mothers talk a good deal to their children, mostly at a level the child can cope with. They make the children feel that whatever they are doing is usually interesting; they respond with enthusiasm and are free with praise. They provide a variety of objects and diverse situations for the child to investigate, and encourage him to do so. They lead the child to believe that he can expect help and encouragement most, but not all, of the time. They are imaginative and follow up the child's interest in objects by explaining and demonstrating their possibilities. At the same time they limit their expectations to the infant's present capabilities.

They set guidelines for the behaviour of their children. They are generally permissive and indulgent, but they prohibit certain actions firmly and consistently. They are secure enough to say "No" from time to time when this is necessary. They skilfully develop and strengthen the child's intrinsic motivation to learn. They encourage his involvement with objects and situations so that he will develop a sense of task orientation, a desire to do things well and to see tasks through to completion. They make the child feel secure.

## SUMMARY

Throughout the first three years of childhood I have stressed the following factors: mother-infant reciprocity, attachment, self-initiated activity, locomotion, language, social relations and selfhood through autonomy. I believe that all of these variables are vital for the realisation of child potential and that they are crucial for the priming of cognitive development.

## CONCLUSION

I want to conclude with some thoughts from John and Elizabeth Newson (1974). They point out that, whilst we are concerned with the psychological consequences of our child-rearing practices, earlier generations of parents were chiefly preoccupied with physical survival and moral growth. Even today, whether the infant will survive at all is the overriding consideration of millions of mothers in the under-developed areas of the world. In these countries infant mortality in the first year of life is more than five times as high as in the more developed countries. During the years from one to four (after weaning) the mortality rate is forty times as high. Whilst the concern of mothers in the more developed countries is "How shall I rear my child?", mothers in under-developed countries are asking themselves, "Will I rear him?"

# Community-Based Support Services for Families with Young Children

## The Nuclear Family in Society Today

By PATRICIA SEBASTIAN*

ALL SOCIAL CHANGE is accompanied by strains and dislocations. All new forms of living go through a period of transition in which there is incomplete acceptance, in which the strains are often masked or unrecognised and in which organised arrangements to meet these new strains are often slow to emerge. Such is the case when we consider services which support the family in its child-rearing.

Traditionally the family has been the social unit responsible for the nurture and early socialisation of children. The family has been the single most influential force which shapes the personality and character of children, and is the primary and most continuous source of human loving and caring for most of us.

Furthermore, the overall expectancies and life styles of the culture are transmitted through the family to the child. Each culture and sub-culture will, however, enlist diverse patterns of thought and action. Thus there are wide variations in family life.

The structure of the family and the way in which responsibility has been distributed among various members of the family, has varied from generation to generation and from culture to culture.

In pre-industrial society the three-generational extended family was a widely established basic unit, integrated within a community of known people. People lived in fairly close groups. So within close proximity there was not only mother and father and their children, but also the parents' mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters and their children. You went to their house, and they came to yours. You knew them all—the old folks, the middle-aged and the older cousins—and they knew you. Moreover they minded your business, just as your neighbours minded your business. Often, as a child, if you did something wrong like spending your bus money on candy, and walking home from school, the phone would ring at your house, and your parents would know what you had done before you got back home. Sometimes you liked it, sometimes you didn't; but at least people *cared.* Within that family and community circle, individuals shared close cultural and spiritual links; they lived essentially as one group. The care and education of children didn't fall on the shoulders of one or two people, as it was a shared activity amongst known and trusted friends. Sickness or death did not spell doom for the small family unit, because it was part of a larger one, where family crisis and problems were able to be absorbed without the very existence of the family unit being destroyed.

As the stable world of the small community has become absorbed into the ever-shifting suburbia, and as families are being dispersed around the country, and even the world, children are growing up in a different kind of environment. Gradually, we have replaced the old extended-family groupings and the small communities of which they were once part, with nuclear families, consisting of one or two parents, and one or two children (evenly spaced) while at the same time losing the old kinship and neighbourhood ties, and by our *increasing* desire for privacy. Today, our family and friends are usually only accessible by phone or by car.

In effect, this very small group is thrown back on itself and expected to find within itself the resources to meet most of the basic needs of its members, including the means of personal development, interpersonal relationships and economic support. In the words of Margaret Mead, "We now expect a tiny family to achieve what no other society has ever expected of the family. In effect we call on the family to achieve *alone* what the whole clan used to do."

Paradoxically, the more people there are around, the fewer the opportunities for meaningful human contact. Whereas before, the neighbourhood consisted of a diversity of settings and known people, now for many children, the neighbourhood is nothing but row upon row of houses, where other people live; each house is much like the other, and so are the people. No longer can you play happily on the streets, or go from one house to another with your friends when you are very young; our world is just not designed for that.

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The environment around us has changed dramatically, too, both from within, and without, providing varying degrees of stimulation for both children and adults. No longer do children develop eye-hand co-ordination by sitting in the dirt stabbing the ants as they go by. No, we have specially designed toys for that, if you can afford them. Outside the home, particularly in the world of towering high-rise, the lives of children, far from being liberated are circumscribed—they are anti-child, and, as Van de Eyken says, demand the type of behaviour, acquiescent, silent, estranged, that is the very antithesis of the inherent nature of childhood.

And it is not much better in the large housing developments we are building today. For the young family who are forced by high prices to move away from the older-established suburbs (and thus the older generation), there are many problems which contribute to the isolation and loneliness they suffer. Deprived of shops, services and often with no transport, young families often withdraw into themselves. They are not homes, says Van de Eyken, but hutches, each a neat and tidy island in a straggling archipelago of suburbia—identical and faceless. When you wander around some of Melbourne's western suburbs, the picture is very clear; there is a silence, a barrenness, broken only by the wind that blows across the estates which are devoid of trees, and often grass. Where are the people? Are they at work or have they withdrawn?

Today the care of children is the responsibility of the parents, and is more often than not the sole responsibility of the mother, who must try to *do* and to *be* everything to her children. If she is sick, who looks after the child? If she goes to hospital, where does she place her child? Perhaps you are thinking that Dad can stay home to care for the family. Well, let me tell you, that's not very often, because he can't afford to have time off. Dads (unless they are supporting dads) fare a little better when they are ill; at least Mum can care for him along with the children.

Historically, it is hard to recall any other period or culture that has ever made child care a mother's primary or only function till ours of the last twenty years or so. It would be hard to point to women of any age or society who did little else but trail after leaking toddlers all day.

But women's roles are also changing, and sometimes I think a little too fast for some of us (particularly the males in our society) to adjust to.

Where formerly a woman's concept of herself and her social role were determined by the fact that most of her active adult life was spent in pregnancies, child-rearing and the running of complex self-sufficient households, now the phase of mothering is a relatively short one, and domestic duties have diminished with more and more effective household equipment. Similarly, most of the goods consumed in the home are being purchased outside it. Furthermore, today broader educational opportunities are open to women, which have tended to alter women's expectations and aspirations. Women now have the option to take up many roles outside the family. Too often, however, I hear from those critics of working mothers, "Well if they can't look after their children, they just shouldn't have any." How cruel some of these thoughtless people are! Firstly, to this one might answer, "Well, perhaps if they had known what it was like to have children before they had them, they may not have had them." Secondly, perhaps they had no choice. I, for one, in the early years didn't. I had a choice between losing everything to pay for my son's hospital bills, or going to work, but I was lucky; I could take him to kindergarten with me. And perhaps there are people who really love and care for children, but who believe that their kind of love doesn't have to be for twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, who can share the care of their children with others who are equally able to love and care for them. Of course there are not all that many places where you can get this kind of care; we, as kindergarten teachers, have tended to make sure of that by ignoring that there is a need for it for so long. Yes, I know that you can give me many facts and figures that will tell me how bad day care is for young children, but I too can also find many others that will tell you that given the warmth, the caring and the love and stimulation, young children will not suffer. Jerome Kagan, at Harvard University, is one who could support this view.

But let us continue.

The fathers in our society now spend long periods commuting to and from their work-places, and the increasing pressures often being placed on them mean that for many there is little time ot spend with their children. In fact, in a recent study carried out in Canada, fathers spent on an average approximately eight or so minutes per week interacting with their infants. It's a long time to develop meaningful relations in, isn't it? No wonder they often feel left out.

With women spending longer and longer periods in the home alone with their young children, many are finding the experience of being a full-time mother and housekeeper with little or no adult companionship a lonely and limiting one. As one writer has stated, many women fail to find the family the basis of support they need to maintain a sense of identity and adequacy, and feelings of boredom and futility increase — along with the annual bill for Valium which is now $9 million per annum.

Furthermore, as their husbands in their jobs leave behind the once-vital girl that they married, this feeling is increased.

In the early years it is difficult to get out. If you want to play squash, you will need to find a babysitter; but where? The courts that do have minding services are packed to capacity, and many do not provide them because of the regulations that have to be met. If you want to do any type of recreation, art, craft—you name it—always the same problem: no one to mind the kids. It's really funny the way our society operates. We can afford to build luxury $350,000 recreation centres and forget to put in a place where children can play safely alongside their mother, thus easing the pressures placed on her. No wonder these buildings are idle for most of the day!

In some cases this isolation is so acute that the mother and her children withdraw totally behind closed curtains and doors, not even venturing out to the shops. Can you imagine the stifling atmosphere it must be for the child? Is that a good experience? Does it really meet the child's needs?

Economically, too, young parents are finding it more and more difficult to survive. A prominent writer on families today, Schlesinger, remarks:

> Our family is a cash-requiring unit. It needs high levels of income to meet the expenditures required of it. . . . Our high standard of living is built on a foundation of family spending for services, material comforts, conveniences and luxuries. Persuasive advertising stimulates the wants and expands the needs of the family. Easy credit fosters ready buying. . . .

In all strata of society young families find it difficult to meet their financial commitments. Many, on the surface, appear to be O.K., but they too still have the pressures, which no doubt reflect back on the family. In one Melbourne suburb I was told by the local M.L.A. there are two attempted suicides per day because of the pressures to keep up payments on house and land. Can these parents really meet the emotional needs of the young child? For the poor in our community we must ensure that they receive a minimum income, so that they can begin to live in dignity, and provide for their children, but we should and can help them towards self-respect if we are prepared to value their contribution and build on their strengths.

I have argued the needs of the normal, average parents in our community. However, let us not forget the many disadvantaged groups — the single mother, or deserted father, etc.—who have to function under even more difficult conditions than the average two-parent family. The single father at present is perhaps one of the most seriously neglected groups in our community; he receives no pension so that he can stay home and look after his child, and yet we also deny him access to facilities for his children.

Parents too are often faced with many guilt feelings about their children. They are told they are wrong to place their children in a day-care centre, but they are right if the children go to kindergarten. They are repeatedly told how to raise a brighter child, but don't teach him to read. In fact, for most of the things you need to know, or for that matter you don't need to know, you only have to pick up the latest women's magazine. The unfortunate part of all this is that, by our very structure, society has left parents to the sink-or-swim method of developing their skills in child-rearing. Too often parenting skills are developed only after a hasty retreat to a paperback or women's magazine. Thus, many parents have unreal expectations of their children, which can, in the extremity, have disastrous effects. Look in the paper and read why a parent burnt a child——"because he went and dirtied his pants." He was only eight months old.

De Lissvoy, in a study of teenage parents, found that their unreal attitudes and expectations tended to make them impatient, intolerant, insensitive and prone to physical abuse. The fathers he asked were sure that a baby of twenty-six weeks should be obedient.

The number of supportive adults who really care about the child, and who can help to stimulate and widen the young child's environment has diminished. Many children now grow up in small families, never really having come to grips with life in its totality—not really living in the true sense of the word. Moreover, they know little about the ageing process, as older cousins, aunts and uncles and grandparents are not around to cuddle and spoil them.

As society became more and more industrialised and urbanised, family roles and functions were fractionalised among a variety of community institutions, each carrying out its functions in isolation under the aegis of specially educated personnel and each with its sharply defined boundary — health centres, handicapped children's centres, day care, kindergarten, old-age homes.

In short, parents today are finding it difficult to cope alone, and to provide all that the young child needs to cope with life. It's not that they don't want to, and it's not that they are not able—it's just that they do need wider community support.

But where is that wider community? A row of individual family units is not a community, nor are the services that we set up in isolation from each other so that we leave the mother scurrying from one to another—the health centre toddlers' group for her two-year-old, and the playgroup for her three-year-old and kinder for her four-year-old.

It's not a community until there is a means, a focus for communicating and working together towards some common end.

The needs of the child are so inextricably linked with those of his family, that we must begin to meet them if we are to begin to bring the young child into focus—not by telling them how, not by handing down prepackaged deals, but by starting where they are, by respecting their needs, their goals and their objectives for their children, and by building on to their strengths (yes, we all have some, if only we look hard enough and are prepared to care enough). It is in this way that I believe we can best serve the child.

# The Community-Based Approach to Children's Services Development

By WINSOME McCAUGHEY*

TODAY THE TERM *community* is continually in use, but it is doubtful whether two people in the one conversation both using the word really know what the other person is saying or referring to when they use it.

Where children's services are concerned, there is undoubtedly a widespread recognition of the importance of services being community-based, and a deep commitment to this approach on the part of many parent and professional groups. But at the same time the thinking around the subject remains vague.

*Why is parent and community involvement and local control so important?*

*What are the criteria against which a service might be judged to be community-based?*

*How is the community-based approach to service planning to be fostered?*

This paper attempts to grapple with some of these questions. Obviously, there can be no hard and fast rules as to what actually constitutes a community-based service; for just as every community grouping will differ in needs, values and lifestyles, so community-based services will differ according to the communities they exist to serve.

However, it is possible to extricate some of the key principles which appear to characterise community-based services currently being developed, and to use these principles as a basis from which to plan future service developments.

*Principle 1.* Community-based services are those which actively foster the process of community development.

Obviously, the word *community* does not refer to a static identifiable object, product or thing. Rather it expresses a process—it's a word which expresses our deep-seated awareness that humans are first and last social creatures, group creatures, who in nearly ever facet of their existence depend on other people for the fulfilment of basic needs and drives. *Community* is a word which refers to people with common interests and needs interacting, interdepending, interrelating, and collectively achieving what alone it would be impossible for them to achieve.

A community only exists where people are actively communicating and relating. So the process whereby children's services are developed and operated is as important as the actual product—the service itself.

As we heard in the previous discussion paper on "the family", our basic social unit of community is now the nuclear family, which in itself is simply too small to meet many of the needs and drives of its members, particularly where mothers and young children are concerned. It is now widely recognised and accepted that community supports are needed for families

—if children are to have the opportunity for full intellectual and social development

—if mothers at home are not to become isolated, lonely, harassed and limited in their choice of occupation

—and, indeed, in some cases if the family is to survive at all.

But where and what is that wider community which is supposed to carry out this function?

Sociologists have defined *community* as occurring where there is "a network of interrelationship existing in order to facilitate the meeting of enough of the members' needs, that the community may be considered relatively self-sufficient".

In Australian society today the aspects of community which do exist are concerned mainly with the meeting of physical needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, physical safety, transport, etc., but we are sadly lacking in those relationships which are concerned with the meeting of needs derived from the social-emotional side of human development. With the rapid increase in population over the last century and the concurrent breakdown of the social support networks of extended family and stable community life, "needs-meeting" has increasingly become the province of government bureaucracies, agencies and institutions. Too often these institutional forms of service provision have served to further perpetuate and reinforce the dwindling sense of people's own capacity to meet one another's needs within a community situation.

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The problem then becomes one of planning services and support systems which actually do meet people's needs and also at the same time help to recreate those community/self-sufficiency reciprocal arrangements now lacking.

Social theorists have pointed out that there are two fundamentally different approaches to plannning and running services.

The first of these is sometimes called "remedial" or "curative". This is seen to be generally a negative force, one which undermines the individual's self-esteem, fragments family and community life, and leads to the creation of the dependency of the individual on "the State".

The second approach to service planning is sometimes called "the developmental approach". This is seen to be a more positive approach, encouraging the individual's self-worth and self-reliance, while creating community and collective self-sufficiency between people.

The first approach, the remedial approach, takes as its starting point the assumption (usually only implicit) that individuals with problems are *personally* inadequate. It then proceeds to extract the individual from his or her environment and to "treat" or "teach" that individual, usually out of the context of the individual's family and community, with the aim of helping that individual adjust to his/her situation. What happens when that individual is returned to his or her environment is rarely questioned. In children's services the net result of this first approach can be to contribute to the fragmentation of family and community life, leaving parents and families feeling powerless and inadequate in the face of the superior knowledge and competence of the professional experts (and indirectly encouraging parents to abrogate their child-caring responsibilities to the State).

The second approach, the developmental or community-based approach, deliberately sets out to enhance the individual's self-esteem while, and through, building a sense of collective and community self-sufficiency.

This approach takes as its starting point the assumption that problems lie not so much with an individual person's inadequacies, but rather, that problems flow from inadequacies within the social fabric of which that individual is a part, and in the inability of the social structure to meet that individual's needs. That is, it assumes that in many cases where the individual fails to develop optimally or even normally, the failure is due to the absence of that "facilitating environment". So a developmental approach starts from the assumption that most individuals and families are "whole" not "sick", and that families with problems are "normal" not "deviant".

The developmental approach assumes that people have purposes and values which ought to be respected. Dr Lilian Katz, in an article entitled "The Enabler Model for Early Childhood Programmes", pointed out that the essential problem today is not how "we" are going to make other people "do" or "learn" what we consider to be in their interests. Rather, it is "how to help people to acquire the skills, knowledge and personal resources they need in such a way as to safeguard, sustain, protect and indeed enhance this sense of self-respect, self-worth and personal power".

When the problem is rephrased in this way, the key characteristic of the developmental approach must be respect for the purposes involved with those who wish to be helped.

Thus, the developmental approach assumes that people do have needs which can only be met outside themselves, and that in most instances the social and emotional needs are best met by other people; that is, by relatives, friends and neighbours, on a reciprocal even-handed, non-patronising basis—and not by departments or agencies of welfare. But departments and agencies have a key role to play in creating the opportunities for interaction and interrelationships.

Recent years have seen a growth in many self-help schemes of the community-development kind. For example, non-working mothers at home form play-groups providing one another with companionship and some time off, and giving their children some opportunities, activities, playmates, etc.; parents who are in fear of battering their babies join together in Parents Anonymous groups, helping one another perhaps better than psychologists and psychiatrists can. Many alcoholics seem to be able to be helped only by others in the same situation through Alcoholics Anonymous; nursing-mothers help other nursing-mothers to gain competence and confidence in breast-feeding perhaps far better than medical professionals; and so the list of self-help groups could go on through out-of-school-hour programmes, neighbourhood centres, etc., etc.

So if communities are to develop those networks of relationships which have the capacity to meet people's social and emotional needs, and if people with common interests and needs are to be able to find one another and develop those mutual-support relationships, then opportunities for social interaction and exchange need to be created. Perhaps one of the most important roles for service planners and providers and for agencies and government departments lies in the creation of those opportunities for social interaction and in facilitating the growth of community networks which can enable those relationships to develop.

*Principle 2.* The second community-based principle relates to what can be called "neighbourhood focus". That is, services will be community-based insofar as they take account of the needs and resources of families living within a definable limited geographical area. People need to have relatively easy access to one another and to the service if the community-based approach is to work.

There is a possibility for a community to exist at the level of the immediate neighbourhood. That is, between the groups of families who live virtually within walking distance of one another and who share needs and interests in common where their children are concerned. It may, of course, also include other individuals and families who, while not having child-care needs themselves, do have skills, resources or just time to share. There may be others, such as some elderly people, who feel forgotten and unwanted, and would like to be part of the community group in which they can give as well as receive.

Perhaps one of the best ways of obtaining a mental picture of this is to consider both the variety of child-care needs which might exist within the one neighbourhood, and also the extent to which the resources for meeting those needs are, to a large extent, already contained within that neighbourhood —if it were to become a real community.

Let's take a trip down an imaginary "Smith Street", for example.

In House No. 1 there's a two-parent family with three young children. Dad's income is relatively low and Mum takes a job to supplement it. They need full day care for two children and after-school and holiday care for the third.

In House No. 2 there's a deserted Mum with two children under school age. She enjoys working with children and is doing a good job, but her income is meagre, and she feels the lonely strain of having no one with whom to share the responsibilities and pleasures of bringing up her children.

In House No. 3 Mum is home with a new baby, the first she's ever had anything to do with. For some reason the baby seems to cry constantly and she wishes she had someone nearby to talk things over with and leave the baby with occasionally so she could get an hour to herself.

In House No. 4 live a retired couple whose grown-up family and grandchildren now live in a distant city. They like children, have loads of wisdom and experiences to share but are feeling rather forgotten and out of things now.

In House No. 5 there's a single father who is finding it difficult to find someone reliable to mind the toddler, take the four-year-old to kindergarten and collect the older child after school.

In House No. 6 there's a family with four children. The two pre-schoolers keep mother flat out during the day, and the older children complain that there's nothing to do in their tiny house and yard during the holidays. Mum herself is getting a bit restless. She used to hold a skilled job and longs for the stimulation it used to give her, not to mention the adult companionship and the economic independence.

In House No. 7 lives a mother with the most exuberant bunch of youngsters imaginable. She can't seem to control them or find enough to keep them entertained. She spends most of her time trying to stop them wrecking the place, and takes them out less and less, as she feels others must be critical of how they behave in public.

In House No. 8 lives a woman whose family is all at school now, and she wants to take a job. She's very good with children and enjoys working with them, but guesses she'll have to take a factory job as there is no child-care work available.

In House No. 9 is a woman with two children under school age who has read various magazine articles stating that the first years of life are the most formative, etc., and she'd like to provide a greater range of activities for her children, but she doesn't know where to begin. She would also like to care for another couple of children, both to supplement the income and for companionship for her own children, but she doesn't know of anyone suitable and interested.

In House No. 10 is a mother who's terrified she's a potential baby-basher. She just can't seem to stop becoming overwrought and lashing out at the children, and she's also concerned that the three-year-old is barely talking.

In House No. 11 a migrant family has recently moved in. Dad is working at two jobs to try to pay off the new home and Mum, who doesn't speak the language or know anyone, is pretty confused. The oldest boy is at school and doesn't seem to be coping very well with his work, and the younger children are very quiet and shy and don't appear to have anything to do with anyone outside the family.

The description could go on indefinitely, but even a look at these few families within a neighbourhood graphically highlights some further key principles which have implications for service development.

*Principle 3.* We come to principle 3 now, which is "The Principle of Integration". That is, services will be community-based insofar as they are an integrated and cohesive force within the lives of both individual families, and of groups of families.

Firstly, the "Smith Street" example shows the extent to which the needs of the individuals within the *one family* are fundamentally interrelated. For example the needs of the working mother for child minding, the needs of the child for good-quality care or the needs of the mother at home for time off from child-rearing and the needs of her child for companionship and play opportunities.

A service which takes account of the needs of only one member and ignores the needs of the other members will be a wasteful one not realising its full potential. An example of this would be a centre which met the parents' need for child-minding but did not offer a stimulating and development programme for the children. A further example would be a service which offered a good programme for the older pre-school child but nothing for the younger brother, or one which ran on too short a daily basis to meet the parents' requirements for minding facilities.

Secondly the "Smith Street" example shows the degree of interrelatedness which the *different families* are experiencing.

Common to many of the adults in "Smith Street", for example, was their lack of companionship and their sense of isolation, their lack of confidence and knowledge of child-rearing, their need for some relief from their duties, and their straightforward need for someone to care for their children when they weren't available, on either a part-time, full-time or occasional basis. Most of the children would have also benefited from being able to play with one another, or from the companionship of other adults, or from a child-orientated environment and from a range of challenging and stimulating activities.

Children's services within a neighbourhood need to be designed to take account of those different needs within families and be an integrated force within their lives.

*Principle 4. A* further principle, principle 4, is also evident from the "Smith Street" example. That is, the need for services to maximise local resources. The "Smith Street" example shows the extent to which many of the resources required for meeting the families' needs in the area are in fact to be found within other neighbouring families. In the imaginary "Smith Street" there were child-care "gaps" or needs relating to the adults experiencing such things in common as loneliness and isolation, a lack of confidence, knowledge and ideas in relation to bringing up young children. Also there were lacks in relation to the children, who would have benefited from a wider range of child and adult companionship, and a wider range of activities, etc. At the same time in "Smith Street" there were resources in terms of adults with friendship and companionship to offer and with experience and ideas to share, and numbers of children who could have been the playmates for the other children. What needed to be built in, then, was a contact-point—a social focus through which the network of knowledge, information, trust, friendship, etc., could develop.

In other words, what is needed in "Smith Street", as in many other neighbourhoods, is a social structure for communication, a means by which people can let others know both what they need and what they have to offer. Out of this, both informal and formal services can be developed which are geared to local needs and which take advantage of local resources.

Too often in the present situation, services are "single-purpose" services. For example there may be a pre-school education centre for the child in the age-group immediately prior to school entry (that is, the four-year-old); there are toddlers' groups in a few municipalities for the two-year-old set; there are infant welfare centres for infants; if your toddler turns three and the local pre-school centre is only taking four-year-olds, then tough! Moreover, the hours these facilities are open make them generally inaccessible to the children of working mothers. There are separate facilities for children of working mothers—child-minding centres for one group who can afford to pay, and a few day nurseries for lower-income groups; and in some States these day nurseries have no educational programme, and the conditions of State subsidies for capital work have been dependent on the buildings being designed to keep each yearly age-group separate from each other age-group; so fragmentation reaches its crazy extreme.

The mother at home with several young children dashes hither and thither from one facility to another, having no time to develop those relationships of trust, confidence, friendship, reciprocity with other parents in similar situations, no time to grow into a sense of community and belonging.

By contrast, a new concept is struggling into existence in Victoria. This is the concept of a children's neighbourhood centre which attempts to be a recognisable, accessible focus for people in the area who either have children or, in some instances, would simply like to be with children even though they have none themselves. Each such centre attempts to serve its immediate neighbourhood and offer the environment and facilities which could accommodate a small group of full-day-care children, a few occasional-care children, provide developmental activities geared to specific age-groups within the context of a programme which allowed for free learning and mixed ages, assist and support people minding other people's children in their own homes by giving them access to trained personnel, a toy library and equipment library, assist parents seeking home-based minders for their children by giving lists of suitable minders in the neighbourhood and briefing parents on how to select ones, assist mothers who are caring for their own children at home by providing them with a place where they can come with their children or leave them for a while or by explaining play groups to them, putting them in touch with others wanting to form play groups by providing living-and-learning classes and experience in stimulation and recreational activities, etc., for the mothers at home.

The essential feature of these neighbourhood centres is that they are locally controlled and parent-participating centres which the people using them feel are their own places, extensions of their own lives, reflections of their own values, places which they work in as equals as part of teams which may include professionals who are welcomed, but on an equal basis, for their knowledge and their humanity.

A further principle, then, demonstrated by the "Smith Street" example is the need for services to be appropriate to the particular needs of the families within that community. Another obvious principle which flows out of this illustration is the need for services to not only be responsive today but to be able to be responsive in an on-going way to the changing needs of communities.

Another crucial principle in the community-based approach is that of parent and community involvement. That is, services will be community-based insofar as they involve parents and the community in the planning, administration and daily operation of the services.

## PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Parents and the family have the earliest, longest and most extensive influence on children's growth and development. As the children's most significant and enduring group, the family is providing the child with a basis for all future development, and is the key transmitter of values, habits, language, culture, etc.

Families vary in the extent to which they can meet their children's needs and provide them with the opportunities necessary for full social and intellectual development during their child's first, most formative years of life. So the community needs to provide services which will support and supplement the family role. In doing this, it has to be recognised that the service and the family are working together in the joint activity of child-rearing; e.g. in a day-care or educational centre, staff and parents are, in a sense, engaged in "shared parenting" and, as such, there must be the closest possible co-operation and exchange. In shouldering the on-going responsibility for caring and providing for the child, parents have the right to know what is going on in the service, and to a say in the way it's run and what's to happen there. From their first-hand knowledge and experience of their children, parents have much to contribute to the service. As children cannot be viewed in a vacuum, but as an integral part of their family and cultural group, it makes no sense to concentrate only on the child. Programmes which do this have failed and will continue to do so.

The social and intellectual gains the very young child makes away from home in an educational centre, will not be maintained unless the family is aware and appreciative of those gains and how they were made, and how they may be furthered. Furthermore, there is little point in a programme which tries to enhance the child's concept or his sense of personal worth if the parents' self-esteem remains low, as the *two are closely related*.

Parents will not become aware of what the professional staff are trying to achieve and will not themselves develop in understanding and ability simply through formalised meetings in which they are "lectured at". Rather, they need to be involved in every level of programme plannning and daily delivery.

For parents, as for children, the best way of developing and learning is *doing*, not having things done for them. As parents take on important responsibilities for establishing a centre, setting policy, deciding on goals and objectives, hiring staff, and taking part in programmes, they too increase in knowledge, skill and confidence. They are in an active learning situation.

> One group of parents, who became a potent force in the advancement of day care in their community, began their experience with a mother's day-out programme. At first it was no more than a babysitting arrangement. Later, they invited a few experts to their meeting to discuss child rearing techniques. The parents became excited about the possibilities of a child-development programme. They hired a pre-school teacher and arranged for space in a community high school. They approached the principal with a proposal to recruit a number of community experts from fields such as child care, social work, nutrition and home economics to teach a child-care course for high school students. The students would also have field placements in the pre-school co-operative. The programme was implemented and proved successful.
>
> As the parents' group gained confidence, they wanted to provide a day-care service that would meet a greater variety of community needs than did the traditional day-care centres. A few months later the group said their programme had been very successful, but not without problems. Interestingly, the problems they saw were similar to those previously noted by the day-care professionals, and the solutions proposed by the parents were consistent with what the professionals would have recommended. However, the big difference was that the insights belonged to the parents. The sense of pride that came from achievement, the group morale, the degree of commitment could never have been achieved through less involvement. [Howard Clifford, Ottawa, Canada.]

Dr. Edward Zigler, past director of the massive, multi-million-dollar Head Start programme in the U.S., considered that the greatest benefit from the programme lay not so much in the children's intellectual gains, but in the parents' realisation that they could effect a change in their lives and in the community. The confidence that comes from success in one area of the parents' lives gave them courage to tackle others they once considered beyond their control.

To ensure that parent participation is a reality, careful consideration needs to be given to administrative structures and daily programmes which involve parents at their own pace and own level and own needs and according to their own interests.

We are often proccupied with standards, but surely active parent participation is an important factor in maintaining high standards of care. It has previously been expected that quality care can best be guaranteed by a heavy input of trained staff but Fine, Clarke and Stuart, in their book, *Day Care in Context*, make the comment that the quality of child-care services can best be guaranteed by an informed, concerned community which is in the position to scrutinise, criticise and advocate adaptation and modification of the service. On the whole, a service will only be as good as the expectation, knowledge and practices of the consumer.

A final principle in children's services planning is that the overall planning, administration and co-ordination of services be carried out by the relevant local government authority where possible. Obviously all these community networks cannot just happen by spontaneous combustion; there needs to be a permanent public authority taking responsibility for ensuring that the necessary development is taking place. Children's services are essentially small-area services because the kinds of services that will be needed and support systems that will be needed will differ from area to area and their development needs to be a very personal and individual one depending on the needs in the area.

The function of a government authority is to make sure that needs are identified, that service gaps are identified and that services are developed to fill gaps in consultation with the community. Priorities have to be set, resources have to be rationalised and distributed evenly and fairly across the community. People have to be co-ordinated with people and services with services. The reasons why local government is suggested as the most appropriate focus for the planning, administering, co-ordination and delivery of children's services are fairly obvious, but they are in fact also spelt out in this present Government's own policy on social welfare.

A Liberal and National Country Party Government views local government as the focus for service delivery, since welfare services provided at the local level will be very responsive to users' needs and wishes.

Local Government has the advantages of:

- small size and proximity to the people;
- political accountability and responsibility;
- unequalled knowledge of local conditions and problems;
- the capacity to mesh together voluntary and statutory welfare services and link them together with other local government planning functions;
- considerable potential for enhancing citizen participation in decision-making;
- the ability to co-operate with one another, where this is believed necessary for effective services.

Children's services have additional features which make this local focus even more essential:

- They are essentially small-area services that are best planned and co-ordinated on a local level.
- Local Government is the most accessible and accountable level of government.
- Services should be accountable not only to consumers, but also to the whole community. Local governments should see that this occurs.
- Local Government can ensure maximum use of local resources.

Community Child Care therefore organised this day in the hope that you will listen carefully to what the parents and community groups are saying to you about the urgent need for a community-based approach in children's services. We do not believe that the community-based aspects are simply a luxury field. We do feel that they are crucial to the future well-being of our society. At present, there is a vast need for a child-care support and family support services.

We believe we stand at a watershed in service development. There is a child-care service gap to be filled and it *will* be filled in one of two ways:

*Either* services will be developed in a way which further hastens and reinforces the present trend towards fragmentation of family and community relationships, and the institutionalisation of every facet of our lives. They can develop in a way which undermines the sense of confidence, self-worth and belonging of the individual leading to a dependency on "the State".

*Or* services can be developed in a way that actively enhances individuals' sense of self-worth, their ability to act, contribute and relate in a way that actively creates a community by providing the means whereby networks of knowledge, trust and support are generated between people sharing common interests.

# Division of Pre-School Child Development: its Role and Responsibility

By BETH STUBBS*

RESPONSIBILITY for provision of services to aid the development and growth of the pre-school-age child and to give support to his parents, has rested with the Department of Health since 1942, when a pre-school section was set up within the Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Division of the Department of Health. Educational staff were appointed, subsidies granted and community groups encouraged to work towards the establishment of services appropriate to age-level of the children whom they wished to cover.

In 1973 the report of the Consultative Council on Pre-School Child Development recommended that services for the pre-school-age child should continue to be developed and administered by the Department of Health, but that a new division be set up. This recommendation was approved by the Cabinet, and in February, 1976 the Division known as the Division of Pre-School Child Development was constituted. This Division has responsibility for educational and care services for the child prior to attendance in primary school. It is concerned with both subsidised and registered services for the child of the working mother who requires full day care and the child of the non-working mother who may attend kindergarten. The age-range encompassed is from birth to school attendance.

The subsidised kindergartens in Victoria have been established as a result of the combined effort of State and local government and the local community. Parent involvement has been an integral part of pre-school education and has been responsible, in most instances, for the establishment of the particular service for an area. In the past, parents have been mainly concerned with the setting up of kindergartens which offered an educational service for the pre-school-age child. Because of the demand for the service, attendance has, in the main, been limited to one year prior to entry to primary school, but where possible, three-year-old children have been enrolled and have attended for two years. Parent committees have administered the centres, claiming subsidy from the Government and employing both trained and untrained staff. They have participated in the programme, contributing their various skills. Parent groups in many areas have recorded their appreciation of the friendships they have gained from this involvement.

Today we have heard from women who are aiming to establish a wider range of services to meet current needs of parents and young children. Parent-run play groups, neighbourhood centres, small day-care centres are being set up throughout the metropolitan and country areas. As with the kindergartens, there is much involvement of the parents who will use the service. The Division is interested in working with community groups and aiding the establishment of services. Where appropriate, the staff of the Division can offer advice, and where finance is involved, aim at developing regulations which will safeguard children, but allow the flexibility needed to meet the varying needs of the community.

A policy of regionalisation of services is being implemented, and the staff of the Division, persons with a kindergarten diploma and in most instances post-graduate qualifications, while appointed centrally, are seconded to work in a region. These regions vary in size according to the population and needs of the area. In the metropolitan area, a region could consist of one large municipality, while in the country, twenty shires might be encompassed in one region. The pre-school advisers work closely with the community groups and staff of the shire or city councils and are thus able to become aware of the needs of the area and to help plan appropriate services. They are available as resource persons to the various groups and are involved in multi-disciplinary teams developed through the Early Childhood Development Complexes which are being established throughout Victoria.

The staff of the Division are concerned that good-quality education and care programmes are developed in all services.

Finance for the establishment of services is provided through a capital grant towards building costs and a recurrent grant which for kindergartens covers the salary entitlement of the teacher and assistant. Funding formulas for the small-group child-care centres are at present under consideration. To qualify for funding, standards with regard to building, staffing, enrolment and equipment must be met.

One of the aims of the Division is to integrate services where possible and to fully utilise buildings to provide a variety of services.

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# Abstracts of Papers and Research Reports *

## Day Care Research Project

By BETTY FEARN WANNAN

*This project was funded by the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Child Care Research.*

TITLE: A study of the experience of children from 0-5 years in the existing subsidised day nurseries in Victoria, in particular, looking at the quality of social interaction and the child's involvement, or otherwise, in activity.

PURPOSE: To assess the existing subsidised day nurseries in Victoria as child-rearing environments.

METHOD: An inventory of the day nurseries was made. Staffing, buildings, equipment, hours, programme—every aspect of the physical space—was considered.

The children's behaviour was observed. The sample included 225 children (six in each 3-5-year group and six in each 0-3-year group) at each of the then functioning subsidised nurseries.

Recording was on a pre-coded schedule which included not only the child's manner of acting, direction of attention and continuity of action, but also any adult input that occurred.

The coding system that was used was that developed by Elizabeth Prescott, Sybil Kritchevsky and Elizabeth Jones at the Pacific Oaks Children's School, Pasadena, California (1972).

The particular schedule was designed to answer two questions:

1. What opportunities had the adult provided for the child?
2. What personal setting had the child selected from those available?

The information gathered was used to provide the basis for evaluation of the day nursery in terms of the naturally occurring behaviours of the children.

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Each set of data, i.e. details of administration, physical space, staff behaviour and children's behaviour, was handled separately,

In looking at the administrative details, the lack of appropriate background experience of the persons in charge of the centres seemed to propose an immediate dilemma. Of the twenty-three persons concerned, twelve stated that prior to accepting the position they now held they had had no experience in work with young children. The nursing sister was the usual person in this role and her background had most commonly been training in a general hospital. Sixteen were triple-certificated nursing sisters. Four had trained in children's hospitals and two were kindergarten teachers.

The daily timetable, which was similar in most centres, reflected a concern for routine. Although the day started at 7.30 and ended at 5.30, there were only four hours out of these ten in which children played. Much of the day was spent in waiting—either in bathroom routines, waiting for the whole group to be toileted, washed and have their hair done, waiting for lunch to be served, waiting for other staff and children to arrive to start the day or for parents to come at the end of the day. The opportunities for free play were virtually limited to two hours in the morning—one indoor and one outdoor and one hour in the afternoon.

The physical space in most centres, although well provided with equipment, lacked on the availability of this equipment to the children throughout the day. The absence of elements of softness in the environment was a concern, too, in an all-day programme when children need comfort or a place to relax at some time throughout the day. Coupled with this was the lack of "opportunities" for seclusion—hideaway places—somewhere to withdraw. Group membership is a tiring activity for small children over a ten-hour day; yet in many centres there were very few places where the child could be even partially away from the group for any part of the day.

Again, in looking at the provision of physical space, the "enclosed" state of many groups was considered a problem. The children entered the room in the morning and for the balance of the day had only the four walls and the adjacent playground as their "world" for five days a week and their only companions the children in the particular group and the two or three staff members in the room. The programme for the day in most centres was also very predictable.

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* Information about those whose papers are summarised here appears at the end of this section.

More attention was paid to the equipment and activity for indoor play than for outdoor play. Many playgrounds had insufficient "play places" available to the children and very few opportunities for more complex play. Dress-ups or improvisation equipment were rarely seen and much of the play was "simple physical activity". Playgrounds for older children were better equipped than those for the under-threes—not only more equipment but a wider range of play choice and complexity.

Staff behaviour was significantly different in various settings and with different age-groups. During outdoor play, staff were observed more frequently in "silent supervision" or in "conversation" with peers on matters irrelevant to children. Communication to individual children or to small groups occurred more frequently during indoor play. During "transition times" or while engaged in "domestic duties", staff communication to children was observed less frequently. Considering the breakdown of the timetable, this was considered a matter of concern.

Staff working with younger children gave less "guidance" to children and also less "direction". This may have been a feature of the training of the staff working with each age group. Teachers and pre-school mothercraft nurses worked with the older children and they scored higher on these variables than did mothercraft nurses or untrained assistants. Staff, of course, were required to "do" more for younger children.

Three aspects of the conditions of work for staff in the subsidised day-care centre at the time of this study which need to be considered when any discussion of staff performance is made are:

1. The long day of face-to-face contact with young children—an eight-hour shift.
2. The one holiday a year—three weeks at Christmas time.
3. The very low wages paid to both mothercraft nurses and untrained assistants.

Some changes have occurred since this study was undertaken, but in comparison to other early childhood services, there is still need for improvement in the conditions of work for staff in all-day care.

From the observations of children's behaviour we found that during outdoor play children engaged in more physical activity and social interaction than they did during indoor play, but that there was more involvement — "attends with concentration" — observed during indoor play at most centres.

But the most remarkable phenomenon was the amount of time the children spent on "non-task, non-social" behaviour. This was observed in all centres at a higher level than other categories of behaviour. In some centres 42 per cent. of the children's behaviour was classified this way. This type of behaviour occurred more frequently during transition times than during indoor play periods but also more during indoor play than during outdoor play.

A certain amount of this wandering, uninvolved inactivity would be tolerable, but it appeared constantly in all centres and thus raised questions of the adequacy of the environment to meet the needs of the child for development and learning.

Was the child "lost"? Overwhelmed? Withdrawn? Sorting out what he saw and where he was?

Trying to make sense of his whole experience? And how concerned should we be about this?

The very high amount of this particular category of behaviour—in the total picture, over all centres, it occurred 30.6 per cent. of the time—has raised many questions for us—the researchers.

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# Home away from Home

By PHYLLIS M. TINNEY

*A comparative evaluation of three Melbourne Family Day Care projects by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, in association with the City of Knox and the City of St. Kilda, supported by grants from the Australian Government. Family Day Care is home-based child care provided by selected housewives operating under the supervision and with the support of a professional staff employed by a responsible agency.*

THERE IS A NEED to highlight some of the difficulties of research, related to this project, and research in general.

Originally, this was to be an elementary piece of research, examining the experiences of the three projects. It was felt that there was a need to clarify and document what had happened since the start of the projects. Also, an obligation was felt to other projects which had modelled themselves on these pilot schemes to put out a progress report. It was not the task of the researchers to argue the broader issues of Family Day Care on a community or philosophical level.

Since then there have been dramatic cut-backs in funds to Family Day Care, which have resulted in reduction of staff to such an extent that the core idea—that staff should develop an approach which blended welfare and education—has had to be revised.

It was thought essential that the direction of the report had to be changed. To be of use to anyone it had to highlight the difficulties forced on existing Family Day Care projects and emphasise the successes which had been achieved with the old staff ratio of a kindergarten teacher working with a welfare officer or social worker (or two kindergarten teachers in one case). The education element in Family Day Care no longer existed.

There were indications from interstate that the Victorian dismay was widespread.

The decision was made to turn the final report into a handbook on Family Day Care. Such a late decision was fairly dramatic, but it was judged to be necessary if the report was to be of use to existing or new Family Day Care projects.

Family Day Care had certainly "caught on" and many new schemes were financed in 1975.

Many of the recommendations point to the need for more staff to put into action some of the innovative ideas, and Family Day Care staff need to speak out loudly against decisions which were made not long before the report was published. The Government should wait for results of Government-sponsored reports when they are relevant to decision-making.

This was an action-oriented report designed to yield information for policy-makers.

Researchers should accept some responsibility for their research findings being translated into action or at least be around afterwards to question why there is no action.

Change is uncomfortable, takes time and often makes individuals or groups feel threatened, but to do nothing as a result of findings may be just shelving issues. This report has been in print for six months and there seems to be very little action on a Commonwealth, State or local level from the recommendations.

Where can we go from here?

The report found that Family Day Care was a valid community service, but in some areas needed more (not less) professional supports to reach its full potential as a child-care service. There is a need of strong criticism of staff cut-backs from people who are experiencing the difficulties created.

But Family Day Care concerns all people involved in the well-being of the pre-school child—it should particularly concern members of the Australian Pre-School Association.

## Complementarity in Parent-Child and Teacher-Child Interactions

By LOUISE ARNOLD

THIS PAPER describes some results of research into the way young children and their caretakers cope with the tasks of early childhood in a comparatively disadvantaged neighbourhood. The study used a developmental framework and role concepts in selecting variables for study. There was special emphasis on the accessibility of personal and community resources and services. One such service is pre-school education, and the study was concerned with the conditions under which parent-child and teacher-child interactions do and do not complement one another, and the implications of this for pre-school education and for social work.

Methods used in this study included:

(a) a social profile of the neighbourhood based on unobtrusive measures;

(b) semi-structured interviews of a random sample of mothers of pre-school children living in this neighbourhood (N = 100);

(c) case studies of a theoretical extreme case sample of children attending kindergarten, based on extended non-shedule interviews with teachers, parents and children and observation of the children at regular intervals over eight weeks (N = 30);

(d) on-going contact with the community by means of individual and group discussions, formal and informal.

This is a quantitative descriptive study. Findings can be summarised as follows:

1. The neighbourhood has a concentration of families and their young children affected by social and eonomic inequalities, separated from wider kinship links, and affected by educational, economic and housing disadvantage.

2. The social expectation is that mothers of pre-school children will cope with and integrate their differing roles in the developmental tasks of their children, their adult partners and themselves. The resources and services needed and made available for this are identified, and critical assets and deficits isolated.

3. The findings suggest that, for some children, expectations at home and at kindergarten are not basically related to one another, and are not complementary. This occurs at a time when the integration of such expectations is a critical growth task for the child. The case situations of such children

appear to have some features in common which together are absent from the case situations of other children: the child has coped inadequately with developmental tasks to the time of pre-school admission; the home situation is such that basic needs are not met adequately; the child has not acquired a set of responses at home appropriate to the accepted way of behaving outside the home, and expectations of the child at kindergarten contradict those at home in all major areas of behaviour; the interaction between the child and the kindergarten is one of withdrawal; the child is regarded by the pre-school teacher as "not adjusting".

4. These features of the case situations need more controlled and inter-disciplinary study. However, provisionally these features should be considered as a sign that admission to a pre-school centre *as a single measure* may emphasise childhood deficits rather than reduce them, hamper further school-age development rather than prepare for this, and so may be a disservice rather than a service for the child and the family.

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# The Demand for Child Care: Metropolitan Adelaide

By DON WATERS

THIS STUDY was undertaken as a joint project by the South Australian Education Department, the Kindergarten Union of South Australia and the South Australian Department for Community Welfare. The work was supported by a grant from the Advisory Committee on Child-care Research.

The study attempted to make an audit of the provision of pre-school facilities in the Adelaide Statistical Division, 1975.

The research aimed to describe the geographical distribution of pre-schools, kindergartens and day-care centres. It was found that much of the bias of provision of pre-school places towards areas of higher socio-economic status has now been removed. Provision and socio-economic condition of areas correlated +.65 in 1970, but only +.24 in 1975. Day-care centres were found to be most concentrated in long-established suburbs and near major access routes to centres of employment. Day-care siting was not related to socio-economic status of the nearby area, and many clients lived many kilometres from the centre used.

A further aim of the study was to examine the level of provision. In 1975 there were 11,300 places for 14,200 four-year-old children, an overall provision rate of 79 per cent. About 4 per cent. of the total pre-school population was attending day-care centres at the time of the study. About 10 per cent. of all pre-school children had attended a day-care centre for some period during their pre-school years.

An attempt was made to estimate demand for additional provision. Sessional kindergarten or pre-school participation would probably rise to 90 per cent. of the four-year-old cohort if appropriate provision were available. In the current economic climate any significant increase in overall demand for additional provision in day-care centres seemed unlikely.

The study also looked at the participation rates of various socio-economic levels. In spite of a more even geographic distribution of the centres, the lowest socio-economic groups still had low participation rates. Only about half of the children from poorest families attended kindergarten or pre-school. The children of migrants from non-English-speaking countries had even lower participation rates. Less than one-third of such children had attended kindergarten or pre-school.

Day care was mostly provided by relatives or neighbours. About 75 per cent. of the children placed in day care were cared for in this informal network. The families most likely to use formal day care were those with only one or two children and where the mother was regularly employed. Many clients came from outer newly developed suburbs. Other groups more likely to use formal day care were families where the mother had a professional career or where the mother found it difficult to cope with young children. Over 40 per cent. of children of single-parent families had regularly attended a day-care centre.

Over 280 play-groups were known to be operating in the Adelaide area at the time of the survey. The number is expected to increase.

Several family day-care networks had been established. There were indications that this form of day care may be best received by English-speaking families in outer suburban areas.

Integration of the various early childhood services was being strongly promoted at the time of the study. Co-ordination of services may be a more realistic aim than multi-purpose services. Particular difficulties seem to be associated with the provision of day care in pre-schools and kindergartens.

# Children in Need of Care and Protection

By Dr. PATRICIA M. LEAPER

CHILDREN under six years of age are usually brought before Victorian Children's Courts on care-and-protection applications under three of the eleven sets of provisions set down in Section 31 of the Social Welfare Act 1970. The three clauses are (c), (f) and (h), which for brevity are commonly known as "no visible means", "not provided" and "unfit guardian". Very few younger children are brought before the court under any other provisions.

A study of an almost complete sample of 1972 cases revealed that application of clauses (c), (f) and (h) covered a wide range of circumstances under which statutory authorities define a young child's need for care and protection. Dwelling on the range of circumstances of children brought before the court can obscure important similarities and differences between circumstances of children brought under the same or different clauses. The study showed that a small but significant number of the 625 children brought before the court under the provisions of clauses (c), (f) and (h) in 1972 were apparently in need of only temporary emergency care, and these children were brought under the same provisions as children apparently in need of long-term care. Moreover, children in need of short-term care were processed in the same way as children in need of long-term care and admitted to large reception centres. The family circumstances of children in need of short-term care indicate among other things need for expansion of child and family shelters in local communities. Some kinds of family units were shown to be particularly vulnerable to becoming dysfunctional child-care units in the face of illness and other crises. Among the types of family units found to be peculiarly vulnerable were those with low incomes, those whose adult members did not have readily marketable work-skills, those that were socially and/or geographically isolated and those with a lone parent.

The family circumstances of children brought under the provisions of clauses (c), (f) and (h), and apparently in need of long-term care, tend to be more chronically and radically disturbed than the family circumstances of children apparently in need of only short-term emergency care. Findings from the 1972 study set out below apply to children in need of both short-term and long-term care. However, you may take my assurance that they apply more frequently to children in need of long-term care.

Less than 30 per cent. of 625 children in the (c), (f) and (h) sub-sample lived with families that were composed of both natural parents, the child and possibly some siblings; and, there was no evidence that parents who did not live in "typical" family units had self-consciously chosen to live in an alternate type of unit. In "typically" composed families and in families with one natural and one substitute parent there was often evidence of dysfunction of the family unit.

The children tended to come from families with smaller or larger than average numbers of child members.

The socio-economic and other resources of the families tended to be poor. Over 27 per cent. of the children lived in fatherless family units and over 6 per cent. lived in motherless family unts.

In the small proportion (one-third) of families where a natural or substitute father was a family member, almost 28 per cent. of these fathers were unemployed or on pensions or similar. Only a small percentage of mothers worked and only a handful of these worked at occupations outside the unskilled category.

The families of the children were beset by numerous other problems. In more than a fifth of cases one or both parents, but usually the father only, had severe social and/or employment problems associated with heavy use of alcohol or other addictive substances. In almost 28 per cent. of cases, one or both parents, but usually the mother, was sufficiently severely emotionally disturbed to have needed relatively prolonged and intensive treatment at a specialised psychiatric facility. In over a fifth of cases, one or both parents, but usually the father, had some criminal conviction, though the convictions may often have been for lesser misdemeanours or some such. In almost 7 per cent. of cases one or both parents apparently had a very low level of effective intelligence. In over 8 per cent. of cases one or both parents had been convicted for sexual offences against children, usually the children for whom care and protection applications were being sought.

The findings set out above and other findings from the study have numerous implications but these could not be discussed in the time allowed.

## A Vocational Development Approach to the Selection of Pre-School Teacher Trainees

By Dr K. L. UNDERWOOD

SELECTING students who are interested in and positively motivated towards their courses and related occupations remains a persistent problem for academic course selection procedures.

This paper described one approach with some potential for handling this problem. It involves a self-directed learning experience based on two related strands of research in the field of vocational psychology, viz., personal data systems and vocational development.

Evaluation data were presented from two standpoints: first, "consumer satisfaction"; and second, a comparison of experimental and control groups against criterion measures of vocational maturity, realistic perceptions of the pre-school teacher's role and academic achievement at the end of first year of training. The results were interpreted as encouraging, but obviously more work needs to be done to improve this approach.

## Recording Infant and Early Child Development

By BARRY E. BURDON

*The research reported in this paper is supported by grants from the Advisory Committee on Child Care Research, the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission and the Research Committee of Salisbury College of Advanced Education, South Australia. The paper is the third progress report.*

INCREASING numbers of young children, toddlers and infants are being placed in regular full day care. For many of these children there will be a consequent reduction in the amount of contact with their parents, those adults who are usually most concerned with a child's progress and development. For this reason it was considered essential that the development of children in day care be recorded or charted in some way. This would ensure that regular development could be recorded and more significantly that there would be available some means of recognising possible inconsistencies in development, delays in development or possible retardation. Such a recording instrument should have a sound theoretical basis, be simple and easily administered or recorded and at the same time maintain high levels of validity and reliability. This would enable the assessment to be carried out by those who have the day-to-day responsibility for the on-going care of the young child.

An extensive review of the literature and of existing measures of infant and pre-school development did not bring to light any measure which met the requirements of the proposed Development Record, although a small number had similarly stated objectives. More recently, contact has been established with personnel of the National Children's Bureau in London, who are engaged in a similar project which closely parallels this, but who have been unable to proceed with a standardisation of their pilot *Developmental Guides*. (Sparrow, 1974, 1975.)

The theoretical focus adopted in this project is Piagetian. While this focus is obviously related to cognitive developments, certain explanations for social and personal development follow from the adoption of this conceptual framework. It is intended that the Developmental Record be an observation-based instrument. As such, it would comprise a series of statements of behaviour indicative of developmental sequences. These behaviour items would be easily and unmistakably observable in children, would be closely related to the dynamics of the developmental processes inasmuch as these dynamics have been elaborated by theoretical and research considerations and be significantly related to important aspects of the child's actual behaviour and development. The Record would thus avoid a "testing" situation and the consequent problems of interpretation of results often encountered when such techniques are used, especially by personnel not trained to do so.

Many existing instruments were reviewed and a good deal of attention was given to theoretical and research writings of the nature and dynamics of development, and as a result, an extensive pool of items of age-appropriate behaviours was built up. From this pool of items a more selective list was drawn up and field-tested. Item-development was extended to cover behaviours that could be observed through relatively informal interaction with the child, together with behaviours that could be described accurately by significant others (e.g., mothers, other staff of the centre).

Consideration has been given to recording data in a way similar to that used in the Denver Developmental Screening Test (Frankenberg, Dodds and Fandel, 1973). This format has some advantages, including the fact that behaviours are checked straight on to a profile or summary sheet, which is thus very readily available and shows obvious areas of developmental lag, as well as the extent of such lag or delay. During the early part of 1975, the selection of items for inclusion in the final experimental version was finalised and data collection for the standardisation of the behaviours to specific age ranges was carried out. Information was collected on over 600 children by means of a structured interview with each child's mother.

Data has been computed and is currently being analysed. The Developmental Record project is due for completion by August, 1976.

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# The Aims and Objectives of Australian Pre-School Teachers

By BARRY E. BURDON and MARGARET TRYBECK

*The research reported in this paper is supported by grants from the Research Committee of Salisbury College of Advanced Education, South Australia.*

WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS (e.g. Ashby, 1972), little of significance has been written about the goals and objectives of pre-school education in Australia.

This Australia-wide survey was developed to collect information from practising pre-school teachers about their ideas of the aims and objectives of pre-school education. Teachers are a significant group who could contribute to the development of policy statements about new or desired directions in pre-school education. This report presents an analysis of the South Australian data only; the full survey report will be available later in 1976.

## DESIGN

Acknowledging the weaknesses and shortcomings inherent in the questionnaire technique, it was decided that this was the only feasible method of collecting the desired information. The questionnaire used in a recent similar survey in England (Taylor, Exon and Holley 1972), was adapted and field-tested for use in this survey. The questionnaire was designed to collect information about the teachers, the broad aims of pre-school education, the role of the teacher, the provision of pre-school education, specific objectives of pre-school education and other information about the development of the teachers' ideas.

## SAMPLE

A random sample of the 180 three-year-trained pre-school teachers employed by the Kindergarten Union of South Australia were invited to participate in the survey. Of these, 42 (23.5 per cent. of total) accepted the invitation and 34 (19 per cent. of total, 57 per cent. of sample) completed the questionnaire. Most of the teachers were under thirty-four years of age (73 per cent.), many were married (60 per cent.), but few had children of their own (26 per cent.). Most entered teaching for "vocational" motives (71 per cent.) and many (35 per cent.) gave "to work with children" as their most significant motivation. Most were happy with their choice; however, many expressed the need for in-service education giving "current trends" (44 per cent.) and "problem-children" (31 per cent.) as topics for consideration.

## RESULTS AND COMMENT

In considering the broad goals of pre-school education, the child's social and self-development took first priority for 70 per cent. of the teachers. Only 23 per cent. considered intellectual development as being most significant, although 50 per cent. did give this second priority. This was reinforced in considering the more specific objectives where social, transactional and interpersonal objectives received many "very important" ratings. A number of intellectual objectives were considered as "important", but these in many cases appeared to be related to "getting along" and "being independent", e.g. "to help children reason", "explain ideas", "take initiative in problem-solving". Specific intellectual skills and preparation for school-type learning was given low prority.

Teachers considered that they should play a significant role in selecting the activities in which children were involved. This probably reflects the attitude of many teachers irrespective of the age-level of the children they teach that "teacher knows best". The consensus was almost unanimous (see Table 1).

*TABLE 1—Teachers' Role Preferences*

| ROLE | n. | per cent. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Child-selected activity, child-directed | — | — | 3 |
| 2. Child-selected activity, teacher-directed | 1 | 3 | |
| 3. Teacher-selected activity, child-directed | 20 | 59 | 97 |
| 4. Teacher-selected activity, teacher-directed | 13 | 38 | |

An interesting age-related difference emerged. Teachers over thirty-five years of age showed more tolerance toward children directing their own activities. Younger teachers (under 35 years of age) were more dominant, being more concerned than older teachers not only to select activities but also to direct the children's course of action. This probably reflects the greater developed confidence of the more experienced (older) teachers.

In ranking their priorities for which groups of children should become involved in pre-schools, these teachers gave high priority to children from deprived homes and from institutions, to migrant children and to those with emotional problems. Lowest priority was given to normal children, children of large families, children whose mothers "want to be free" and the mentally handicapped child. Over half the teachers indicated that special facilities should be made available for the mentally handicapped. The majority of teachers (88 per cent.) indicated that 75 per cent. of a class should comprise normal children, suggesting that most of these teachers are willing to cope with a reasonable proportion of children with special needs. There does appear to be some conflict, however, between this percentage composition of normal children and the fact that normal children were seen as one of those groups least in need of pre-school education.

## CONCLUSIONS

This report indicates a few of the trends emerging from the study. Perhaps of greatest significance is the concern for the child's social-personal development to the exclusion almost of concern for preparation for the formalities of school learning. Between the two, general intellectual developments are mentioned but are of secondary concern. It would seem that teachers assume, and perhaps with some justification, that unless the child is able to adjust in a positive way to himself and others then the formalities of later education are of little benefit. The areas of intellectual adjustment and development are viewed with less certainty, and because of this, merit greater attention from those establishing curriculum policies, and from training institutions.

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# Validity of Descriptions of Children's Behaviour

By RICHARD C. BELL and Dr. ISLA M. STAMP

*Note by Dr. Stamp: This paper was prepared by Richard Bell, who carried out the study. The scoring technique used by psychologists was primarily being tested for validity and the study supports the technique. It additionally gives rise to important speculations concerning the role of teachers, and the desirability of counselling to be available to parents in times of crisis. A series of statements describing behaviour at approximately age ten was developed as an aid to reporting on this age group.*

A STUDY WAS MADE of *Behaviour Study Technique* (B.S.T.) data collected for 1,925 children attending Victorian kindergartens in 1967. The children were a representatitve sample with respect to sex, distribution throughout the State, and, within the Melbourne area, with respect to socio-economic status of the suburb of the kindergarten. No anomalies were noted in the age distribution.

There were no substantial differences in B.S.T. descriptions in any of the breakdowns examined—age, State distribution, socio-economic distribution and sex — though the latter showed slightly more positive descriptions were used for girls. The coding scheme introduced in 1972 to enable psychologists to use the B.S.T. as a screening device was examined by comparing the obtained scores with those defined by the experts. No substantial differences were noted. Only one item, pertaining to habits, failed to discriminate between high- and low-scoring children, and the measures of internal consistency for each of the four area scores was satisfactory.

Five hundred and fifty of these children were traced to State primary schools and behaviour checklist data obtained from their teachers. Relationships between the two sets of data were examined in a number of ways. The probability of correctly classifying a school child as adjusted or maladjusted, given the kindergarten classification was about 0.3 (i.e., a correct classification was made only about 30 per cent. of the time). Multivariate analysis showed that there were similarities in the data, but that these were masked by a factor which differentiated the two sets of data.

An attempt was made to generate hypotheses about the reasons for the differences between the two sets of data by interviewing about thirty mothers in some depth. It was found that, even within this small group, a large number of factors was proposed to account for the changes in behaviour. It also seemed from these interviews that liaison between parents and teachers was poor, and that there were substantial differences in the behaviours of some of these children seen by the parents and the behaviours seen by the teachers.

## Analysis of Children's Use of Activities in Kindergartens

By Prof. W. D. BARNEY

TEAMS OF MOTHERS were trained to observe preschool children at work in three kindergartens. They recorded the number of children at each activity, whether they were involved with the activity, whether the play was solitary, or co-operative, whether they were talking, using a two-minutes-in-every-ten observation schedule.

Each mother was allocated one or two activity areas to observe. Six observations were chosen at random over a four-week period and provided a variety of weather conditions. The kindergartens chosen were in three different types of suburbs—executive, white-collar, blue-collar. An outstanding feature of the results was the high preference for "outside" activities by the boys and the restricted number of preferred activities when confined indoors. Girls' preferences spread more widely, but tended to indoor rather than outdoor. Boys appeared to be attracted to the more vigorous, more mobile types of play—climbing, pulling, pushing, constructing (carpentery, block-play, construction-toys). With boys, language (instructions, advice) was more frequently associated with the outdoor than the indoor activities.

In a follow-up three- and four-year-olds were questioned to discover whether they perceived kindergarten activities as sex-linked. Younger children seldom did. Among four-year-olds dancing, doll-play, cowboys were frequently seen as girls only, boys only. Families were questioned concerning choice behaviour. It was clear that some families encouraged and rewarded sex-typing of activities.

## Review of Furniture and Equipment for Kindergartens and Day Care Centres

By JEAN ADAMSON and KAYE POLLACK

THE STUDY comprises an investigation of the existing problems and future requirements for indoor furniture and outdoor equipment for kindergartens and day-care centres. A sample of adult users of furniture and equipment was interviewed and data from experts and relevant literature are presented together with the data from short observation and experimental programmes. The need for more flexible furniture and equipment which can adapt to the changing needs of the children and adults who use the centres is stressed with particular emphasis on multi-purpose and totally dismantlable designs.

## The Activities of Two-Year-Old Children

By Dr. AUDREY LITTLE

THE PAPER reports and interprets observational studies of the spontaneous activities of thirty-two children attending special sessions at the Child Study Centre of the University of Western Australia and suburban play groups in 1974 and 1975.

Videotape recordings were made of eight groups of four children in eight once-a-week sessions (indoors) or twelve children (the university sample) in the playground (total of fifteen hours recorded) and written reports of an experimental nursery programme carried out on a once-a-week basis for twelve children in their third year over a nine-month period at the Child Study Centre.

Results from all three studies are consistent in showing developmental trends in various aspects of behaviour—strong preferences for solitary activities, high proportion of adult-child interaction and low child-child interaction (including speech), preference of both sexes for domestic and parent role activities, high interest in mobile toys (both sexes) and low interest in creative activities (unless encouraged by staff or parents) and, most noticeable of all, a demand for sameness and consistency both in the environment and what went on in it.

Problems encountered are discussed, including problems associated with the use of Videotape as a means of gathering data in a group situation.

## The Auckland Play Centre Association

By MEG STUART

THIS PAPER gave an outline of the Auckland Play Centre Association's growth and development and changing role over the past thirty years and its continuing concern with parent education and family involvement in its centres.

During the early 1960s, with the establishment of the Maori Education Foundation, a large number of rural Maori families sought membership. Many Maori women who undertook Association training during this period later became involved with the establishment of the Aboriginal Family Education Centres.

Since then, the Association's widespread country areas have become associations in their own right and Auckland is now an urban association — still large, but with a different character.

Parent participation was discussed, along with the implications of State funding.

## On Making Pre-Schooling Suit the New Clientele

By Dr. P. R. de LACEY

EVIDENCE IS OFFERED that pre-schooling in Australia serves disproportionately the children of higher-income families, and is thus geared to serve the needs of these children. It is urged that pre-school formal education is especially needed for the children of lower-income families, in particular Aboriginals and immigrants from mainland Europe. If these disadvantaged groups are to attain a proportionate share of economic and political power in order to alleviate their disadvantages, either they must adapt successfully to the dominant middle-class patterns of schooling, or middle-class lifeways must change. Since middle-class opposition to social change has been singularly effective in the history of Australia, it is argued that low-income patterns of cognitive development should change in the direction of middle-class expectations, though nevertheless preserving cultural identity where this is essential to a stable self-concept. Pre-school programmes demonstrating some effectiveness in the context of this deficit model are described.

## Co-Learning and Consultation

By A. GREY

OF THE LIFE-STYLES lived in the water-washed South Pacific, European cultures are the most recent. Indigenous cultures are selective of technological advances whilst retaining their homes and family and community, a setting receptive to family education. Family education incorporates an awareness of babies as active beings, reaching out to stimulate and to stimulation; of individual uniqueness; of the significance to people of quality of child/parent interaction; and of learning as a dynamic process.

Family education examines élitism, professionalism and deficit thinking, finds them to be shibboleths and wanting and replaces them with concepts of co-learning, consultation, adequacy and appreciation and lifelong learning.

Family education involves family members of all ages meeting together, observing, discussing, recording, realising their own resources.

Family education enables adults, in their parental role to move from a supplementary to a consultative role; from there to participation and on to involvement and eventually through a number of phases to total responsibility for decision-making.

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## Mothers' Speech and Child Language Learning

By TONI CROSS

RECENT RESEARCH into child language learning has found that almost all adults and most older children address pre-school children in a highly specialised form of language. Mothers, who have been the subjects of most such studies, have been found to use speech to the small children that is very simple in meaning and grammar. They use more concrete vocabulary, and speak much more slowly, repetitively and clearly to them than to adults and older children. Ferguson (1976) suggests that we call this kind of simplified adult speech, a "Baby-Talk Register", while Newport *et al* (1975) have adopted the term "Motherese". Interest in "Motherese" has increased lately because it has become apparent that it forms the primary source of linguistic input to the language-learning child. Many researchers have speculated that it is precisely because of the simplicity, redundancy and clarity of "Motherese" that young, normal children acquire the complex rules of their first language so rapidly and easily in the first few years of their life.

Some of the questions mothers' speech research is concerned to answer, are, briefly:

(a) What features of the register give the child the greatest assistance in linguistic acquisition, and how do they interact with his developing capacities?

(b) Do adults differ in the quality of the assistance their speech provides for the child, and what effects do these differences have on the child's later development?

(c) Are children who do not have regular and frequent opportunities to engage in one-to-one conversations with competent speakers of "Motherese"—children in large institutions and day-care centres—delayed or impaired in language development as a result?

The present paper reports the results of a comparison between the speech of mothers to two groups of two-year-old children who differed in their average rates of development; one group was learning language at a very rapid rate and the other was developing at a more average pace. Both groups were matched precisely for their linguistic abilities and we then investigated the incidence of sixty-five features of their mothers' speech.

We have found, so far, that the mothers of the accelerated children use far clearer, more articulated speech (i.e. less unintelligibility and disfluency) than the mothers of the average group. They also talk more often about the topics that the child himself initiates, and more rarely introduce new themes or unrelated semantic material into the conversation. They spend more time than the average group's mothers expanding and elaborating and extending the meanings of the child's preceding utterances, and more often completely or partially repeat their own utterances. In addition, they use fewer utterances per conversational turn, allowing the child to take his conversational turn more often than in the other group.

We also found that they tended to use less complicated syntactic structures at the beginnings of their sentences, although this was the only syntactic measure, of twenty used in this study, that gave significant between-group differences.

At least two other recent studies, Newport *et al* (1975) and Snow (1976), have reported similar findings, so that it is likely that we are beginning to obtain a list of the features of the input that facilitate or inhibit the child's progress in language development. Much further research will be necessary before we can say with confidence exactly how important these aspects of adult-child interaction are in the acquisition process, and precisely how they interact with the child's developing cognitive capacities to affect his rate of acquisition. However, the nature of the features that differentiate between the inputs of accelerated and normally developing children have suggested some plausible hypotheses about the nature of this interaction.

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## Speech in the Home and in Day-Care Centres

By GILLIAN PARMENTER

THE STUDY examined the language used by and to two-and-a-half-year-old children in the home and in the day-care centre. In all cases, speech was highly situation-specific in that the amount of output produced and the extent to which the child took the initiative in conversations were much lower in the day-care centre than in the home. Children cared for in same-age groups interacted more with the staff at the centres than children in mixed-age groups. However, the differences in the speech attributable to the situation were minimised in the home, with the exception of a tendency for the day-care-centre group of children to be less dominant linguistically. It was concluded that attendance at a day-care centre affects the speech of a two-and-a-half-year-old when he/she is in the centre, but that this effect probably does not carry over into the home situation.

## Optimum Physical Environments for Children's Centres

By GRANT and MARY FEATHERSTON

THIS STUDY reviews the demand for children's services, and focuses particularly on the model of the full-day programme Neighbourhood Centre, in which parents and the community are active participants.

Implications of child development theory and practice, and of recent work in environmental psychology, are articulated into a number of comprehensive Environmental Objectives for children's centres.

Activities of children are analysed for environmental correlations, resulting in a minimum number of discrete Activity Areas.

The proposed environmental objectives, when applied to these activity areas, give rise to the conception of Interlinked Spaces (integral places containing supportive physical materials), each differentially exposed to each other relative to their function.

Finally, favourable Environmental Criteria are proposed for each area, including approaches to the centre, and covered outdoor play. (Outdoor playground environments lie outside the scope of this report.)

The physical environment is seen as either supporting or thwarting the interactive relationship between child and adult. A responsive environment invites, permits and supports a child's endeavours, with the adult mediating, guiding and "matching" the child's growth needs.

This research study has been undertaken for, and funded by the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission.

## Children with a Handicap and their Families

By IRENE McANDREW

THIS WAS an outline of some of the findings of a two-year study completed at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, in 1974. The study concerned the stresses and problems that face the handicapped child and his family during his early years, together with some suggestions for coping with these. Information was obtained from interviews with 116 mothers of children with congenital physical handicaps. The children's ages were between five and ten years and their handicaps were of varying degrees of severity.

Some of the problems and suggestions noted were:

There are constant pressures on the mothers of these children over years. Many of these resulted from the time required for the constant physical care and medical attention needed. The mother's health was often adversely affected.

There is likelihood of difficulties for siblings. These often lead to behaviour problems. There is usually no help forthcoming for the siblings at present.

There may be financial problems, especially those of hidden costs, need for structural alteration of houses, or curtailment of the father's work opportunities.

There may be curtailment of family activities, including outings and holidays; also, adverse reactions from friends are common.

The child's difficulty in occupying himself and the problem of contact with other children (one-third were isolates) are common. From an early age occupations to compensate for missed opportunities and to inculcate a habit of self-occupation are important, and help with these is vital.

More information is needed about what it is like to be a child with a handicap, but one-third of the sample had emotional problems and many of the mothers needed advice about preventing or dealing with these.

Parents, children and siblings need ongoing skilled support, counselling and explanation, starting from birth or diagnosis, to ensure healthy attitudes for all. Parents are also likely to need help with recognising needs that are applicable to all children of a particular age. Opportunities to meet with other mothers, especially prior to kindergarten age, in situations where trained staff is available to give support and advice would be helpful with the latter.

The children need to assess their own capabilities realistically and adjust to the world. Attendance at kindergarten was seen as extremely helpful with this and also with breaking down prejudice towards the a-typical on the part of the non-handicapped.

## Assessment of School Beginners

By HELGA M. ROWE

THIS PAPER dealt with the rationale and development of the ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) checklists for school beginners.

Most of the readiness tests currently in use in Australian schools were developed in the U.S. and aimed at predicting likely problems with academic work. It was suggested that accurate prediction is impossible at age five years because of the variety of reasons for problems and that labelling a child as having a problem at the beginning of his school career is likely to be detrimental. Therefore imported tests that are available are largely inappropriate for Australian school beginners.

ACER has developed checklists for school beginners that are aimed at prevention of problems rather than prediction. These checklists describe simple behaviours that may be expected of most five-year-olds. They are fundamentally different from norm-referenced tests. They do not help to diagnose the nature or the cause of a child's school problems, but they provide an analysis of specific educational needs of individual children so that a teacher can tailor his/her approach and teaching strategies to these individual needs.

## N.S.W. Aboriginal Family Education Centres Federation

By KEVIN CAVANAGH

IN THIS PAPER the author states that the twelve Aboriginal Family Education Centres affiliated with the Federation provide the first situations in which Aboriginals have been totally responsible for planned educational experiences for Aboriginal children and their parents.

The point is made that non-Aboriginal teachers are likely to lack understanding of what makes for Aboriginality and so provide inappropriate programmes for Aboriginal children both in kindergarten and school. Points emphasised are that Aboriginals learn more naturally from observation than from books and that they need to stay in friendship and family groupings that include all ages.

Descriptions are given by Aboriginal parents of some of the positive results of their participation in these groups, where young chidren, parents and maybe grandparents come together. Their own self-esteem, which had been damaged by their own unfortunate school experiences, had been restored and they now felt competent and self-confident. They were also happy about their children's development in this situation.

# Te Roopu Awhina Tamariki (A Group for All Children), New Zealand

By PEARL ALLEN

TE ROOPU is an autonomous group of Maori women and men who have worked among Europeans, Aborigines and Fijians to promote a programmed early parent and family education in New Zealand, Australia and Fiji. They have consulted with the peoples of Papua New Guinea, India, Samoa, Tonga and Malaysia, also, about parent and early childhood education programmes. Through the work with Fijians and Aborigines, Maoris have gained a deeper insight into themselves and a deeper appreciation of their own way of life, their *Maori-tanga*.

Te Roopu members have visited the United States as international guests of that country's government, lectured in Canada, Alaska, and the U.K. As well, one acted as an adviser to the New South Wales Playgroups Association. Another has been appointed to foster and encourage self-supporting family education programmes in the south-west region of Sydney. Yet another is an associate editor of the World Education Fellow Journal, *The New Era* (see No. 1, 1976), and she and our elder, Mrs. Mana Rangi, who has contributed most to the cross-cultural exchange between Maoris and Aborigines in Western Australia, Central and South Australia and New South Wales, have been honoured by the Queen in recognition of their services.

Te Roopu members have, by working overseas, given strength to Maori parents in New Zealand to develop their own education programmes as Maori familes. Three Te Roopu members are currently visiting at the invitation of two communities and supporting them as the people there set up family education predominantly with Maori families.

Over a decade now, Maoris of New Zealand with a movement of their own, Te Roopu, have exchanged visits with Aborigines and Fijians, who in their turn also have a movement of their own.

In the thoughts of our ancestors:

KO TE KAKANO I RUTA, KUA TIPU—
I TUITUIA AI TE MOTU KATOA. RONGOHIA
ANA TE KAKARA O TONA KAUPARA I TE
PUANGA O NGA MAHI
"TU TE RA, TU, TE PO"

*The seed has been planted and has sprung up to cover the land and bind us all together. From its inception the perfume from the flowering of its work has permeated everywhere.*

## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

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# The Young Child in Focus: Health, Education, Welfare

## The Need for a Comprehensive Care and Education Service for Pre-School Children

By Dr. TESSA BLACKSTONE*

THE MAIN AIM of this paper is to make the case for a comprehensive and universal system of care and education for children in their earliest years before they start compulsory schooling. I want to make this case first in terms of the need to leave behind traditional and now outmoded views of the family and its role in society. I also want to mention changes in the position of children in society, not just at an early age but later too. Second, I want to discuss critically the institutional arrangements currently made to provide education and care for young children in the United Kingdom. In the light of these criticisms, proposals will be made about alternative ways of providing this service. Current developments which may make it easier to achieve these changes will be touched on, as well as the various difficulties which stand in their way. There are then two main issues at stake: the need for the provision of education and care for young children outside the family at all levels; and the best way of making this provision available.

### THE FAMILY

There are many institutions in our society the man from Mars would find hard to understand. Foremost among these, I suspect, is the nuclear family. What would he make of the extraordinary arrangement of man, woman and young living boxed off from other human animals in isolated units each with their own set of material hardware: machines for keeping food cold, machines for heating it up, machines for transporting themselves from one place to another, moving-picture machines for entertaining themselves and so on? Having been told that man is a social animal, he would find all this "privatisation" perplexing.

In adapting to changing technology, human societies have re-ordered certain fundamental relationship in a way that may not be altogether desirable. Industrialisation required a mobile workforce, and small units are more mobile than large units, so larger extended families sharing the same household became rare. Nuclear families of parents and children have replaced them. But although to seek to return to the extended family would not be realistic, or perhaps even desirable, are we satisfied with this replacement?

On arriving, the man from Mars might consult a member of the new priesthood, a professional sociologist, about what the family was meant to do. He would be told that its functions are the regulation of sexual behaviour, reproduction, and the socialisation of children. Others would tell him that normal families consist of Daddies, who are bread-winners and heads of households, and Mummies, who are responsible for rearing the young, and looking after the domestic needs of their menfolk, and children, usually two of them, who grow up loving each other and their Daddy and Mummy. He would find assumptions about this so-called normal family affecting all sorts of things ranging from the uniformity of the buildings put up for people to live in—designed for parents and two children—to the organisation of work—based on the notion that fathers will work all day outside the home and mothers will not.

But further observation and questioning would reveal that much of what the sociologist had described goes on outside the nuclear family. Mars man would soon discover all manner of sexual activity taking place beyond the bounds of the marital bed. He would observe illegitimacy, and refusal to reproduce on the part of young married people, who in the past automatically did so; and he would find the system of socialising children within the family under strain.

If he were good at analysing what his antennae had picked up, he would conclude that things are not what they are made out to be. He would find that cant, hypocrisy and humbug abound about families. Many people no longer live in normal families; such families are not normal in the statistical but only in the folklore sense. Either people live in groups with a different structure, or they live in groups which have a conventional family structure but different roles for their members, of which the most important is that women are also breadwinners. And where people do live in such families it is for relatively short periods of their lives, and there is a good deal of dissatisfaction with the arrangement. What is "normal" is not necessarily desirable.

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What needs to be recognised is that although it is still alive, the nuclear family is not very well. I suspect it never has been, but we have reached the point where we should be more honest and less hypocritical about it than in the past. For ever-increasing numbers of people, alternative arrangements suit them better. The sickness can be diagnosed as too much emotional dependency on the part of its members on each other, which leads to unmet expectations and conflict; organisational inadequacy due to an over-rigid separation of roles between men and women; and methods of bringing up children (isolated mother solely responsible for care of children), which are extremely costly to the individual and society when they go wrong, which is quite frequent.

As far as the alternatives are concerned, there is a need to move from perceiving these as outrageously deviant and the deserving subjects of stigma to perceiving them as socially acceptable. Why should not single men or single women live alone with their children without attracting social disapproval? Why should not several families pool their resources and live together without having to overcome almost invincible barriers in securing accommodation to do so? Why should not lesbians with children by a previous relationship be able to live with them and their girl friends unmolested by disapproving neighbours?

Another characteristic of the nuclear family is that it quite often breaks up and re-forms with slightly different membership. Literature abounds with stories of the wicked stepmother or stepfather. The step-parent role is sometimes a difficult one to handle, but this is mainly because of the possessiveness and over-exclusiveness of the natural parent-child relationship. The growth of serial monogamy makes it all the more important that this should change. When my own marriage ended my son said he hoped I would not marry again, because, like David Copperfield, he might be ill-treated and, horror of horrors, in the event of my death, sent to boarding-school. Nearly three years later, older, more mature and less impressed by traditional novelists' conceptions of tyrannical step-parents, he recently announced that he hoped I would marry again, because it would be great to have two Mums and two Dads. Right on! The moral is that there is no such thing as a normal family and it is high time we all recognised that. So those who argue that normal families can look after their young children without any support from the state, and that most families are normal, are wrong. They are making false assumptions about the nature of today's family.

## CHILDREN

What is a child? Is there an easily defined group called children? Does the concept of childhood have any easily and widely understood meaning? And if so, is it meaningful and useful to subdivide it, making use of categories such as infancy or adolescence or indeed the pre-school child or the "under-fives", as they tend to be called in Britain? A child might be defined as a biologically and socially immature human being. Indeed, the characteristic of immaturity is the only thing they have in common. However, the degrees of dependence promoted by immaturity will vary greatly according to the age of the child and to many other factors in the social context of the particular child. Nor is maturity easy to define or clearly related to individual circumstances. Some children reach biological maturity several years earlier than others. The relationship of biological maturity to intellectual and social maturity is also an uncertain one. This is true at the individual level and is also true of societal responses. Thus, although puberty is reached earlier than in the past, the social definition of childhood has to some extent been extended as a result of higher expectations about maturity. Thus in Britain, a fifteen-year-old today is considered insufficiently mature to leave school and enter employment. He is too much of a "child" to do so. Again in Britain a three-year-old is considered ready to leave his parents for part of the day and a five-year-old is considered ready to learn to read. In some other cultures the points in time in which children are considered ready to undertake these things are either earlier or later. In other words, they are at least in part socially determined.

From the point of view of policy the special characteristic of children is that they are dependent and therefore require protection, and those that are directly responsible for them, usually parents, require support to enable them to provide adequate protection. For a variety of reasons, one of the most important of which is the survival of nearly all children to adulthood in contrast to what happened in the past, we have become a much more child-centred society in the twentieth century than previously. This is reflected in a whole range of government policies designed to protect children and to support families with children. As Titmuss put it, "in the nineteenth century parents had rights, in the twentieth century children have rights". But in spite of the great increase in child-centredness, there are many circumstances in which children's rights are insufficiently protected, and there are many children who suffer serious emotional and sometimes physical damage, which in extreme cases may even lead to death. There are a great many more children, who, although not exposed to the most severe deprivation, live in environments which leave much to be desired, and are far below the standards expected by most members of the society for their children. Some of the faults in their environments are not easily remedied by small-scale limited changes in policy. They are a function of deep-seated and fundamental social inequalities which cannot be eliminated without sweeping social change. Others are a direct result of insufficient concern and insufficient imagination in government policy and could be remedied quite easily. The lack of facilities for young children is a good example of this.

But in coping with the problem of rearing children in present-day societies, governments are faced with a variety of competing claims on what are inevitably limited resources. As well as having to balance the claims made by quite other social groups, such as the elderly, the sick or the handicapped, they are faced with difficult choices about priorities within the general area of provision for children. Some of the changed attitudes I have described have unfortunate as well as fortunate consequences which lead to further calls on the state. One of the results of changing ideologies with respect to the rights of children has been the development of a more permissive approach to the socialisation of children. As a result patterns of authority have changed, with adolescent children refusing to accept some of the rules of behaviour required of them by adults. At the same time they are financially dependent on adults for a longer period than in the past. The conflicts involved are likely to generate growing tensions within the school and the family. The transition from school to work may also be more difficult to accomplish than in the past. This change also has implications for the handling of deviant behaviour, in particular crime, among young people.

In Britain a higher proportion of young people leave school for employment without further access to education than in many other industrial societies. The transition from school to work is unnecessarily abrupt, with insufficient preparation beforehand, and inadequate training and further education opportunities afterwards, for many young people. We need to explore policies to make this transition less abrupt, and to improve the information young people have about employment. Examples of such policies are work-experience programmes in schools, which make it possible for young people to be released from school to work, or the right to one day a week paid release from work for further education. All this costs money and makes it more difficult to advance at the pre-school stage. Both are equally legitimate goals of policy.

However, pressures from so many legitimate quarters do not, in my view, excuse the poor record of the governments of all industrial societies in meeting the needs of their young children. They cannot be regarded as the only explanation for this failure, either. It must also be remembered that these pressures take place against a background of ideological conflict about how much should be left to the private individual and how much should be provided by the state. As will be obvious from what has been said so far, my contention is that we have erred on the side of a laissez-faire view of these matters for too long.

## THE HISTORY OF PROVISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN IN BRITAIN

That the state has a duty to protect and provide for young children is not a new idea, but the history of the development of a coherent policy towards young children has been a chequered one. Two strands can be identified in the nineteenth-century origins of pre-school education. The first of these is the Froebelian kindergarten, based on certain ideas about the education of young children through play, and in its early implementation in Britain, largely confined to the middle class. The second is the drive, based on humanitarian ideals and the need for social control, to bring slum children off the streets, which resulted in 600,000 children aged three and four in the infant schools by 1906. This amounted to forty per cent of the age group, and it is interesting to examine the reasons why such large numbers of children of pre-compulsory school age did not continue to receive schooling. In 1905 the women inspectors of the Board of Education produced a report deploring the conditions in which these small children were being taught, and stating that they derived no intellectual benefit from the mechanical and formal teaching involved. They proposed that some other kind of school should be established where children under five from poor families might attend. This was reiterated by another Board of Education Committee in 1907, and it was decided to call these institutions nursery schools. The committee recommended that children under five should not continue to attend elementary schools, and that nursery schools should be set up where they were needed. The government acted on the first recommendation, but not on the second. The most interesting statement in these reports was that, where possible, a child should remain at home with its parents. The view of nursery education as rescue work to save children first from ill-health and later from educational failure prevailed. If home conditions were satisfactory, children should remain there. Thus it was not until the Second World War that any major expansion took place, in spite of the fact that permissive legislation had been passed in 1918 (significantly at the end of another World War), allowing local education authorities to establish nursery schools and classes.

With the advent of war, the demand for women in the labour force resulted in a change in attitude about the desirability of pre-school education, so that by the end of the war there were approximately fifteen times as many children in nurseries as in 1939. The Labour Party had traditionally supported the development of nursery education as an equaliser of opportunity, and the post-war Labour government might have been expected to have given the implementation of the clauses referring to nursery education in the 1944 Act high priority. But the shortages of teachers and school buildings prevented this, so that by the time the Conservatives returned to power there were fewer nurseries than at the end of the war. From 1956 the central government discouraged local authorities from expanding their nursery places because, it argued, the compulsory sector must take precedence. This policy was relaxed slightly in 1964 and 1965, when permission was given to establish new nursery classes as long as they released a specified number of mothers to return to teaching. Under the urban programme set up in 1968, there was a further small increase in nursery schools and classes in deprived areas.

In 1972 the government announced that nursery education would be expanded. In a White Paper laying out a strategy for educational growth over the next decade, they set out a programme for expansion which would entail all children aged three and four receiving part-time nursery education by the early 1980s if their parents wanted it. They accepted the Plowden Report's recommendation that demand should be fully met, and its estimates that the demand would amount to approximately ninety per cent of the parents of four-year-olds and fifty per cent of the parents of three-year-olds wanting their children to attend. Attendance would be either in the morning or in the afternoon, except for a minority of fifteen per cent in each age group (three-year-olds and four-year-olds), who would be able to attend for the whole school day. The form of expansion was to be nursery classes attached to ordinary primary schools for children aged five to eleven rather than separate nursery schools. Unfortunately, within two years of the start of this programme of expansion, it has been slowed down to virtually nil growth, as a result of large public expenditure cuts designed to help deal with our economic problems. Perhaps, however, in the long term this halting of expansion will be less undesirable than it appears at first sight. It provides an opportunity to think again about the aims of the policy and whether they can best be met by expansion in this form.

## AIMS OF NURSERY EDUCATION

The traditional aims of nursery education in this country are as follows. They are to provide for the child one or two years of regular attendance, not necessarily full-time, at an educational institution before he starts compulsory schooling. In this setting he will be given the opportunity of meeting other children and will be encouraged to learn to co-operate with them and to accept the requirements of being one of a large number. He will be given more specific social training in tasks like dressing himself and eating in socially accepted ways. His emotional development is encouraged by improving his self-confidence, enhancing his independence, teaching him to curb aggressive impulses and so on. His intellectual development will be stimulated, too, by the provision of equipment and materials designed to promote motor and perceptual skills, and by music, poetry, stories and games, which directly or indirectly are designed to improve linguistic ability and develop imagination and creativity. Outdoor equipment is used to help physical development. The aim is to consolidate the home in all these respects, not to replace it. But it recognises that all the requirements of young children, intellectual, social and emotional can only in the rarest of instances be entirely provided by the home. This is the case for universal part-time educational provision for all children before compulsory schooling begins.

Much of this is thoroughly laudable and above criticism. However, it neglects a crucial element in today's situation: a substantial and indeed growing minority of children require much more than part-time *education*—they require full-time care as well. The policy is in fact based on the notion of the "normal family" which I criticised earlier. It does not, for example, take sufficient account of the needs of the increasing numbers of single-parent families, of the needs of important minority groups such as the West Indians, where there is a long tradition of female employment. Nor does it give sufficient recognition to the needs of working mothers in general. The attitude of the Plowden Committee in *Children and their Primary Schools* (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967) towards this issue was ambivalent. It piously declared that it was not the job of the educational system to encourage women to work. It argued that "low priority should be given to full-time nursery education for children whose mothers cannot satisfy the authorities that they have exceptionally good reasons for working", implying disapproval of working mothers. Yet, at the same time, it undertook complicated calculations to ascertain the economic return of nursery education through the opportunities it offered for the release of married women to return to work. There are two senses in which its attitude towards the relation between female employment and nursery education can be criticised. On ideological grounds it can be criticised for clinging to traditional views about mother's place in the home, which allow women little chance to choose whether they wish to work or not. The majority of mothers of young children will not, but a significant minority will either need or want employment outside the home. On pragmatic grounds it can be criticised for taking a stance against a social trend which is growing fast, which could not be prevented anyway and which must be taken into consideration by the relevant social services.

## THE DIVIDED SYSTEM

Up till recently it has been assumed that the place for children who need care rather than education is in day nurseries. However, they are few in number and fall far short of meeting the demand for places; they are not even able to meet the need in highly deserving or even desperate cases. They are the responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Security at the central government level and are run by social services departments at the local level, in contrast to the nursery classes, which are the responsibility of the Department of Education and Science and run by the local education authorities. Whether this split in responsibility should continue is questionable. Even more questionable is the notion of separate provision for a minority of children in institutions providing care, whilst the rest are in institutions providing education. This division is particularly undesirable in circumstances in which only the educational provision is expanding whilst the number of day nurseries remains static. The obvious solution of expanding the day nurseries as well would not be the best one. This would leave a small proportion of largely underprivileged children outside the educational system in separate institutions that could even become stigmatised, because of their predominantly deprived clientele.

Before considering alternatives to this split system, it should be made clear that large numbers of children under five in Britain leave their homes during the day to go to neither day nurseries nor nursery classes. Some of them go to pre-school playgroups. These are mainly run by voluntary organisations or by parents, some, but by no means all of them, obtaining some subsidy from public funds. Their supervision is the responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Security. Playgroups are predominantly, though not exclusively, middle-class alternative to nursery education. Others go to child-minders. They are a predominantly working-class alternative to day care. Child-minders have grown up to fill the gap left by the insufficient number of day nursery places. Women take children into their own homes, making private arrangements with their mothers and charging them for the service they provide. In theory child-minders are meant to register with the local authority social services departments, as a result of which they are subject to inspection. In practice many of them are unregistered and many abuses take place. Overcrowding and neglect often leads to physical ill-health and emotional disturbance—occasionally it has even led to children's deaths. Although playgroups have done an invaluable job in filling the gap left by lack of nursery education, they tend to have certain disadvantages in relation to nursery classes: lack of continuity; less professional expertise; poorer equipment and so on. The disadvantages of the current system of child-minding are palpable.

## ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS

There are a variety of possible modifications which might be made to the existing system. These are as follows:

(a) Separate nursery centres which combine the facilities of the day nursery, the playgroup, and the nursery class run jointly by education and social services departments. There are two possible disadvantages to this: administrative complexities caused by dual responsibilities; and lack of continuity as a result of separating the centres from the schools.

(b) Day nurseries for the under-threes (run by social services) and nursery classes for the over-threes with an extended day for children who require longer care because their mothers are at work (run by education). This has the drawback that some children change establishment at three, but has the advantage that it increases the number of places in existing day nurseries by removing children over three from them. From the bureaucrat's point of view it has the advantage of requiring the least administrative and organisational upheaval.

(c) Unification of pre-school provision under the education departments. The falling birth-rate means that places are available in primary schools which could accommodate not just a nursery class but a unit taking children under three. Such an arrangement would provide a continuous educational experience. Its main disadvantage is that the educational system is not at present geared to the care of infants, nor to year-round full-time care.

(d) Unification of pre-school provision under the social services departments. It would admit of playgroup provision for the majority and day-nursery provision for the small minority of the disadvantaged. But provision may not then have a satisfactory educational content, and the disadvantaged would be segregated in day nurseries.

(e) Family day care using community resources, e.g. child-minders organised by the local authorities for children who need all-day care. The child would be taken to the local nursery class by the child-minder when it reached the age of three but continue to be looked after by her after school-hours. This would be economic, but there is the danger that the child-minder remains isolated, and sometimes they themselves are disadvantaged. Some institutional support would be needed, in the form of training and advice for the minders.

(f) Non-institutional provision for children under three and nursery classes for those over three. Educational visitors bring toys and equipment into the homes to instruct the mother how best to encourage her children to play. Mothers could be encouraged to bring their children to toddlers' clubs. This alternative is often put forward as a way of providing a more stimulating environment for under-privileged children; it would not, however, help children whose mothers are in employment.

(g) Day nurseries provided by employers at the work-place. This is a popular proposal among those who wish to save public expenditure. Its weakness is that employers could exploit mothers who are dependent on places for their children; and there are problems of transporting children some distance; nor does it solve the problem of separating off the children of working mothers into non-educational provision. Consequently there are grave doubts about this course.

Of these various possibilities, the one which in the long term probably has the most potential as a comprehensive system which can meet the needs of all children effectively is the third listed above: unification under the education authorities. It is vital that there should be an educational element to the care of children under five; provision that is purely custodial is nowadays unacceptable to all the parties concerned in decisions about it.

Education authorities must therefore play an important role whatever system is adopted. Integrated provision under the auspices of the education authorities has the added advantage of providing the child with continuity. Whether the child needs full-time care from infancy or starts part-time education some time between the age of three and four, he will have the opportunity of a continuous unbroken experience in the same institution. The primary or first school would thus cater for children from birth, or soon after, through to the age of seven or eight. The number of infants will clearly be much smaller than the number of five-year-olds: what can be expected is a growing number of children as we proceed up the age range. The hours children attend would also vary greatly according to their family's circumstances. Flexibility and ingenuity is consequently required from professional and other staff working in the first schools.

## PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Clearly there would be a number of difficulties in implementing integrated and comprehensive provision of this kind: professional opposition; political and administrative empire-building and problems of resource allocation with respect to both manpower and buildings. It may be difficult to persuade teachers, in particular infant and primary school heads, to take on responsibility for children under three, which they have not had before. Some in-service training will be necessary to allow them to do this. Many teachers will resent an extension to the school day. Local councillors and administrators with a concern for the social services may not be willing to let part of their present responsibilities be handed over to education departments. There may be difficulties in putting up new buildings or converting existing ones, and using staff, such as nursery nurses, who have been trained to work in one context in another. However, none of these difficulties seems insuperable.

There are also, in contrast, some current developments, which should make expansion in this way easier. Over the next ten years, as a result of the continuous decline in the birth-rate since 1964, the number of school pupils is expected to fall substantially from its present level of around nine million to between seven and eight million. This is in marked contrast to the large increase in pupil numbers (from seven million to nine million) over the last ten years. The extent of the fall depends on whether the birth-rate remains at its present low level, continues to fall or starts to pick up. But in spite of these elements of uncertainty, the position is to a large extent determined by the lower number of children already born, and a large drop in the future school population can be confidently predicted on this basis alone. As a result there will be spare capacity, some of which might be used to extend the primary schools downwards.

Nevertheless, overcoming some of the difficulties described above will require a great deal of co-operation and communication between the various departments involved at both local and central level —contact which in the past has been all too infrequent. Whilst not opting for the radical approach I have suggested, the government has recently made a start by issuing a circular to local authorities encouraging greater co-operation, so that at the very least the various departments know what their opposite numbers in other departments are planning. There has also been a more general central government initiative to improve the co-ordination of the social services, which may provide a useful backcloth against which the kind of changes I am proposing might take place, and I should like to briefly describe this.

The Central Policy Review Staff, or Think-Tank as it is colloquially known, published a paper in 1975 entitled the "Joint Framework for Social Policies". The Central Policy Review Staff is a small multi-disciplinary staff in the Cabinet Office and was set up by the Heath Government in 1971. Its job is to enable Ministers to take better policy decisions by:

(a) helping them to work out the implications of their basic strategy in specific areas;

(b) establishing the relative priority to be given to different elements of the government's programme:

(c) identifying areas in which new options could be exercised;

(d) ensuring that the underlying implications of all courses of action are fully analysed and considered.

One common thread running through many Central Policy Review Staff activities has been a concern with subjects involving more than one government department. It is particularly concerned that the activities of different departments complement and do no contradict each other. In principle, government policies in social and other fields are "integrated" by the Cabinet and other committees of Ministers. In practice, these bodies spend much of their time dealing with specific issues, often at short notice and in isolation from each other; relatively little sustained effort has been given to looking across the field at the inter-relationships between different policies. This is particularly true of social policies which are complex and inter-related, yet the responsibility of many different departments. And within the area of social policy provision for the under-fives is a good example of the need for better co-ordination. There is not only the unfortunate administrative split, based on an undesirable separation of the concepts of care and education, between the Departments of Education and Health and Social Security; there is also a conflict of policy between the Home Office and the Department of Employment, which on grounds of anti-sex discrimination and the extension of the pool of available labour, wish to ensure that women's right to work is a reality, and the Department of Health and Social Security, which has opposed the expansion of day nurseries because it considers young children are best cared for by their mothers, who should not be encouraged to work.

The aim of the Joint Framework for Social Policies is to create a climate in which there will be much greater awareness of the need for co-ordination. Basically, it hopes to make social policies more effective, and one way of achieving this is to make sure that resources are used in the most efficient way, so that different services complement each other without either overlaps or conflicts of objectives. Its method is to choose a limited number of topics and conduct short analytical reviews on them, which end with recommendations for change, rather than to try to devise a single comprehensive framework within which all social policies could be related to each other. The aim is to choose topics which are both significant in themselves and seem likely to lead to conclusions which could be applied elsewhere. One kind of topic that is being studied is a client group —so far the disabled of working-age has been selected. An equally appropriate client group would be pre-school children. However, even if this is not selected for study at some future date, there could well be some spin-off from the climate established by the Joint Framework for Social Policies' work. There are grounds for at least some optimism that decision-makers and professionals will begin to see the need for a more integrated approach to defining needs of young children and their parents and making provision available.

## CONCLUSION

There are two final points to be made before concluding this paper.

The first is that the problems outlined are not uniquely present in Britain: nearly all industrial societies are grappling with them. The United States and most countries in Western Europe neither meet demand nor need in providing for pre-school children. And many of them have not managed to devise a satisfactory way of meeting demand and need for various kinds of children. Although I know little about it, I suspect Australia is no exception. Perhaps the most important underlying difficulty is that a policy for provision for young children must inevitably have multiple objectives—and as soon as multiple objectives are accepted, it is hard to avoid running into difficulties in meeting them.

My second point is of a rather different kind. It is that there is no way of escaping from the fact that the education and care of young children outside their own homes is expensive. This is perhaps an obvious point, but in a paper on policy and its implementation it would be irresponsible not to mention it. Although I have allowed myself the luxury of eschewing calculations of cost, we must always have these at the back of our minds. As I mentioned earlier, there are many competing claims for scarce resources, and in Britain at least, they cannot all be met. However, this should not be an excuse for doing nothing. A great deal can be done for our young children at rather lower cost than we should like in an ideal world. If buildings are not perfect, equipment not as good as it might be, or staffing standards not as high as we would like, this is a pity, but managing in such a situation is usually, in my view, better than doing nothing at all. Of course, certain minimum standards must be observed. However, a great deal can be done with more limited resources than we would like in an ideal world.

This paper has tried to make a case for comprehensive education and care for young children before they start school. It has suggested that all families can benefit from some support in the rearing of their young children, and that some will need much more than this. It has suggested that those who need much more should not be separated from those who need less. In conclusion, I want to add that, as well as wanting to see a more comprehensive system of care and education in the community, I should also like to see a more comprehensive system of care and education in the home. Comprehensive care in the home means that both parents look after their children. Mothers should no longer shoulder the burden alone. Nor is the kind of support that some fathers offer enough, for example, games at the weekend or a story in bed at night. They must share the task of coping with the eating problems, the dressing problems, the wet bed or the need for love and comfort in the middle of the night. The state can never substitute for the love and care of parents except in some platonic nightmare—it can only help parents give them by providing collective systems of care for part of the time. If the care that parents can give be more equally divided between them, everyone will be better off: mothers, fathers and children.

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